THE SCHOOL AND THE WORLD

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BY

VICTOR GOLLANCZ

AND

DAVID SOMERVELL

AUTHORS OF "POLITICAL EDUCATION IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL"

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TO

THE SCHOOL

WHICH BOTH WE

AND THOSE WHO DIFFERED FROM US

SOUGHT TO SERVE

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PREFACE

In December, 1917, the present writers wrote a little book entitled "Political Education in a Public School," in which they put forward their views as to what the aims and methods of a modern liberal education should be. They also described certain experiments which they had been permitted to make in one of our old English Public Schools, experiments which both illustrated the authors' principles and tested their value. In July, 1918, that book was published.

But in the intervening seven months several things had happened. On the one hand, "Political Education" had produced further striking evidence of its power over boys' intellects and characters, evidence altogether more striking than anything that had occurred up to the time of writing the book. On the other hand, the movement in the full tide of its success ran upon rocks and has been, for the time being at any rate, utterly and completely destroyed.

The authors have left the school in which their experiments were made.

When the book was published, its reviewers in the press raised one by one a series of problems which we had already encountered in a practical shape in the course of our work, problems hardly touched on, however, in our book, which was devoted to exposition rather than argument. Such problems were: How far is political propaganda inseparable from political education, and in what respects is such propaganda desirable or undesirable? How can political differences among the masters themselves be made to play a helpful rather than an injurious part? Does the introduction of politics into the curriculum open a way, as the very able reviewer in *The Westminster Gazette* suggested, for Prussianism in its most insidious form, the conscription of educated opinion? Are the old Public Schools the best medium for political education, or should the new wine be poured into new bottles? and lastly —for educational "subjects" are or should be but aspects of a single whole—what of political education in relation to morality, and to religion?

The present volume, therefore, essays a twofold task. The first two chapters briefly recapitulate and continue the history of our

work down to its abrupt end. The latter chapters deal with such questions as those mentioned above. One feature of the earlier volume survives in its successor. The Appendix to that volume contained a selection of articles written by boys for our political paper, *The School Observer*. As an Appendix to this volume we print a few more articles by boys whose work did not then appear. We are under no delusions as to there being anything very extraordinary about these articles and those printed in the previous volume. Abler work has been done by abler boys in various schools at various times. They are interesting as the combined effort of a group rather than as the work of individuals. We reproduce them as the only concrete evidence available of the character of one aspect of our experiment.

In the former volume we suppressed the name of the school out of deference to the wishes of the Head Master, and though our own judgment was against the concealment as a wholly superfluous piece of mystification, we continue to respect his wishes.

One word of apology is needed for the use to which we have put the utterances of our reviewers. The reviews revealed the interesting and important fact that thoughtful people really felt strongly, one way or the other, on the

subject of political education. They constitute a symposium of conflicting judgments upon an educational problem of which they one and all recognize the importance, and as such their main features are worth preserving.

Having said this much about the reviews it is necessary to add a word more. The quotations we have chosen are, quite naturally, very largely critical, and as such give no idea of the very warm welcome the general policy of the book received. Not one in five among the reviewers was hostile. One of them, however, the *Church Times* reviewer, was virulently hostile, and appeared to us not merely to dislike our educational policy, which he had every right to do, but to blaspheme against the very idea of a liberal education. As we have quoted from no other "Church" paper, we should like to remark here that a number of other such papers, representing various schools of religious thought, gave the book a generous welcome.

Our experiments perished in the dark days of last spring. Within only a month or two came the turn of the tide. It is bitter to reflect that, could they but have survived until victory and peace brought a return of political sanity, they might have weathered the storm and conciliated some of their bitterest enemies, and

reached safety. Possibly, though gone, they have left their mark.

Meanwhile pneumonia has carried off, in the prime of early manhood, their staunchest friend among our colleagues. He was not one who took any but a very small part in the actual conduct of the experiments. He once lectured to *The Politics Class* on "Liberalism." But he had a genius for sympathy, and always, when difficulties arose, it was to him that we turned, because he had the gift of making us feel that it was still worth while to persevere. Had we been wiser, he could perhaps have served us still further by bringing us into touch with some of those who differed from us, and helping to a mutual understanding. For everyone was his friend. The dedication of this book had already been chosen before he died, and we are unwilling to alter it, but perhaps we may also venture to offer it as an unworthy tribute to the memory of Alan Gorringe.

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"That such an experiment should have been permitted in one of the great public (English) schools is a sign of the greatest promise for the future."—*Aberdeen Free Press.*

"Of all the objectionable and inept proposals for reforming the education of our public schools we must award the palm to the scheme of teaching boys politics."—*Saturday Review.*

"We do not believe the authors have delivered all their message."—*Scottish Educational Journal.*

THE SCHOOL AND THE WORLD

CHAPTER I

THE RISE

THE school in which political education was tried for a space of something under two years is in no way a very remarkable school. It has its sixteenth-century founder, "of pious memory," and its "second founder," of memory almost more pious, in early Victorian days. That second founder made the school famous as a centre of stalwart evangelicalism. More recently its fame has been won chiefly in the production of first-class cricketers. Until the early years of the present century the school had also, we are told, a kind of inverted fame as one of the "stupidest" of the public schools, as a dumping ground for young hopefuls who could not pass entrance examinations elsewhere. From that reputation, however, it had struggled fairly successfully to free itself.

The present writers started with the common

assumption that the "Classical" scheme of a liberal education had long broken down in practice, and survived only as feudalism survived in eighteenth-century France, because sufficient energy had not yet generated to create a new scheme to replace it. In part it had already disappeared and given place to the patchwork innovations of the earnest but painfully cautious and conservative reformers who have ruled the schools since the days of Dr. Arnold.* The classical system had become the classical compromise, a clipped and truncated classics, fighting a losing battle for air space amidst a crowd of inadequately provided "new subjects"—history, literature, science, modern languages. In some ways the last state was worse than the first. For the first state had at least been based upon a great tradition and an ordered philosophy of life, but in the last state there was no tradition, no ordered philosophy; only a jumble and a scramble, and a passing of examinations. Such a system or lack of system must fall a prey sooner or later to some educational movement based on a coherent and defensible doctrine.

* A brilliant "depreciation" of Arnold and his school has recently appeared in Mr. Lytton Strachey's "Eminent Victorians."

Now, as it chances, such a movement is already in the field; we may call it the "Cult of Efficiency." It proclaims a great many truths about the necessity of increasing productivity, about the connection between education and the world of business, and generally speaking points to the achievements of Germany for our envious imitation; it proclaims the commercial utility of Spanish and Russian, and ranges in its advocacy from advanced chemistry to shorthand and book-keeping. Much that writers on these lines have to urge against the present system is perfectly sound and reasonable. Many of their claims will have to be recognised in the educational system of the future. But the admission of their claim as a whole, of the claim of "efficiency" to be the true and rightful heir of the old classical education, would be, to speak without exaggeration, the greatest disaster that could possibly befall this country.

What was wanted then was a conception of education at once "liberal" and "modern," and such the writers found in "politics," using that word in its widest Platonic sense. The classical education set out to study the ancient world, and in the case of most of its pupils achieved

life + destiny of the individual as a member of human Society + a part of the Universe.

little more than the dry elements of two dead languages. The study of the modern world has so far usually meant no more than the study of how to make a little money out of it; the trail of commercialism has been drawn over our Modern Sides. Why should not the modern world be studied in the same noble and disinterested spirit as that in which the best of the old teachers studied the world of Greece and Rome? It is surely worthy of such study. Only perhaps by such study in our schools can its wounds be healed. The central subject of a liberal education should be "To-day," the great difficulties amongst which we are all groping, the great problems awaiting solution, the great movements, capitalism and socialism, imperialism and internationalism, freedom and authority, that are battling for mastery or negotiating for a workable compromise. The value of the classics lies wholly in the contribution that classical art, philosophy, and history can make to the enrichment of our minds for the study of our own problems. The value of modern history lies in the inspiration of its great men, and the warning of its tragic experiences. The value of "Divinity" is only found when we

face the fundamental question, Are we to apply Christianity in our political and economic relations to-day, or are we not? But over and above this reorientation of subjects already scheduled in the orthodox time-table, there is the new subject within which all these (except Divinity, which is fundamental) must be regarded as merely contributory, and that subject is "politics," the treatment, elementary yet thorough, vigorous yet many sided, of the great questions of the day, with all the diverse lines of thought along which each can be approached. Here the fundamental "text-book" is the newspaper. Growing up in such a world as this of 1918, how can it be anything but sheer monasticism to divert the main part of a boy's intellectual energies away from this subject to anything else? Our educational "America is here or nowhere."

With this principle in view, and after various tentative experiments, we obtained permission to found the *Politics Class* described in our previous book. Suffice it to say here that the class was a voluntary body of some thirty or forty senior boys, that met once a week on a half-holiday evening to hear informal lectures

from one or other of us, and occasionally from one or other of our colleagues, on questions of the day. Sometimes the topic was purely general—"Competition and Co-operation," "The Spirit of the Reformer," or the like. Sometimes a historical topic was traced rapidly from its beginnings down to a crisis of last week's newspaper, the discourse ending on the brink of the future with a note of interrogation; such were brief courses of lectures on "The Irish Question," and "The Russian Revolution." A third type were those that confined themselves to an analysis of a strictly contemporary situation, such as the lectures on the various "peace terms" speeches that led up to the Versailles declaration of February, 1918. No attempt was made to create any artificial popularity for the class. The scene was the ordinary bleak class-room with all its sad suggestiveness. Ordinary notes were taken in ordinary note-books. No one, in fact, can have come from any motive but a genuine desire to know what was deemed worth knowing.

Parallel with the foundation of the *Politics Class* had come a remodelling of the sixth form time-table. Indeed, not modern politics but

Greek philosophy had been the first subject to stir that almost religious passion for a real understanding of things, without which knowledge is in the old man mere pedantry and in the young man mere grist for the examination mill. In the present educational chaos, school sixth forms are quite bewilderingly fissiparous. Every one is a "specialist" of some sort or other; specialism means "private work," and if private work enables the gifted few to escape into self-education from the hampering attentions of the form master, it gives the rest a terrible training in the habits of time-wasting and evasion. Yet so long as sixth form orthodoxy is classical scholarship work, the majority will rightly be found among the heretics, and that is the "specialists." The remodelled sixth form time-table made at least a move towards the recognition of the principle that, over and above specialisms, there were certain subjects that were the common concern of all educated men. A heterogeneous body drawn from all corners of the school time-table met together for Modern History, for Outlines of World History, and for General Principles of Science, and (with some regrettable abstentions) for Political Science and

Economics. Some day it will appear ridiculous that these last subjects should not have been deemed a necessity for all the "specialists" alike.

The real test of an educational system is not what the masters do for the boys, but what the boys do for themselves, and in this matter only one large undertaking fell within the scope of our previous book, namely the paper, *The School Observer*, therein described and largely quoted. The idea of this paper, a political journal on the lines of a high-class weekly, published twice a term, with "Notes on Current Events," political "leaders," literary and philosophic "middles," a poem or so, and correspondence all complete—this laughably magnificant idea came entirely from a little group of boys, and one at any rate of the present writers was at first frankly sceptical. Well,—enthusiasm has a way of beating scepticism, at any rate when youth is thrown into the scale. We were quickly harnessed to our task as members of the editorial committee. Our literary contributions were confined to a part of the "Notes on Current Events," the portion of the paper that naturally attracted least outside notice, and was rarely singled out for praise. It is true that a discerning schoolmaster from

another school remarked that these notes displayed "restrained strength even more remarkable in boys than the qualities of the other parts of the paper." I am ashamed to say we smiled and held our peace.

Five of the six issues of the paper appeared, and we had already contracted with our advertisers for a second volume when the crash came. In general, of course, the paper was much less important than the *Politics Class*. The class was a necessity to political education; the paper was a luxury. But it is a man's luxuries that give the clue to his character, and it was the very fact that the paper was always of the nature of a *jeu d'esprit*, a glorious game, a kind of Fleet Street doll's-house affair, that gave a sense of gay adventure to the pursuit of politics. When the paper had been suppressed, a boy who had never contributed to it said to me, "What a shame!" and he added very pensively, "It was all so extraordinarily romantic!"

But so far the movement had only touched the sixth form, and in a minor degree such lower forms as the writers happened to meet in the course of their professional duties. That was plainly not enough. If boys are learning from

their masters something that they really value, their natures are so essentially communicative and sociable that they will be eager to pass it on to their friends. This may seem a paradox, but it is true enough. If of two boys in constant contact, A is learning algebra and B is not, and if A refrains from talking algebra to B, one of two causes must be the explanation of A's reticence. Either he does not care about B or else he does not care about algebra, and since by hypothesis he cares about B, we can only assume that he does not care about algebra. A simple experiment will verify our conclusion. Drop an indiscretion about a colleague during the algebra lesson, and B, C, D and all the rest of them to a long way beyond Z will know all about it before sunset. A, B, C, and D are interested in masters' opinions of each other.

Now we would not claim for a moment that all educational subjects should be required to pass this test of "interest," and rejected if they do not.* That would be grotesque. But it seems to us that the central subject of a liberal education, that subject to which all others cohere and in relation to which all others are justified,

* Something more is said on this subject in Chapter X.

ought to make some such appeal to enthusiasm. Unless education produces enthusiasm for *something*, there is no education, and that is why it has so often been maintained that the real education of Public Schools is in the playing fields. because there alone, for most boys, enthusiasm is generated, if it is generated at all. (For most, one may remark in passing, it is not generated even there. The notion that the average boy is an enthusiast for cricket is as wide of the mark as would be the idea that he was an enthusiast for Greek, Natural Science, or the Church of England.)

Judged by this test of infectious enthusiasm, political education was to produce in the early months of 1918, evidence of its educational worth such as we never dreamt of, and here again the pioneer was not ourselves but a boy, and that boy not one of the group that had started the paper. This boy, who had recently become head of his House, conceived the idea that politics could become the medium of the same spirit of joyous and unforced co-operation as is traditionally (and sometimes actually) associated with athletics. His idea of a school house was of a vigorous and jolly community,

living together on terms of friendly equality such as reduced fagging and the oligarchical "prefect system" to a minimum, and uniting in a real effort to keep abreast with the great world outside by means of a co-operative study of politics and the Press. The idea will seem mere foolishness and an impossibility to many of those who did not see it actually at work. At the best it will seem the kind of thing we may have read of in books about "freak schools," where so much loss has obviously to be set against whatever is gained. In this case, not only the idea, but all the practical details came from the boy himself and the little band of enthusiasts that gathered round him. Indeed, one feels a sense of impropriety in describing what was essentially not our work, but his. However, it was the fine flower of political education, and as such may fitly close this chapter. "Houses," after all, and not "forms," are the natural social units that compose a public school, and a scheme of education that becomes in the best sense popular may, indeed must, take its rise in the classroom, but will find its freest development in the life of house reading-room and house study.

The chief among many "stunts," as they

were called, was a political society. The twenty-five members of this society, rather over half the house, undertook to read between them nearly all the more important newspapers, including one or two French papers. On Sunday the society sat in conclave, the three or four leading events of the week were taken each in turn, and the individual or group responsible for each newspaper put forward the view of the event in question taken by his own particular organ. These views were compared and debated, and ultimately a brief synopsis was drawn up, consisting of the event itself, with the chief typical utterances of the press on the subject set out underneath, for purposes of comparison and contrast. These were typed and posted on a board as "news of the week." Neither of us ever attended a meeting of this society, and it is obvious, from the fact that more than half the house joined in, that we are not concerned here with the activities of a little set of intellectualists. In the fullest sense in which the word is applicable in a public school, these political activities were "democratic," and the effect on the "English" work of some of the boys in middle forms was most remarkable. The present

writer recalls, for instance, a Middle Fifth essay of some three thousand words on the complex, and in some ways repellent, subject of "National Guilds." On how many successive nights the rule against "sitting up" was broken over the composition of this work the recipient of the essay forebore to inquire.

From this beginning other developments rapidly opened. A modest but useful idea was a question paper, on which any one who liked could set down questions that occurred to him in the course of his reading. The House Library naturally felt the impact of the movement, and a political section was started in which books about the Greeks and Mill's "Liberty" stood side by side with the latest essay on "Reconstruction." But it would be giving an altogether unworthy notion of the movement if it were suggested that politics alone, in the narrower sense, marked the limit of these activities. The best modern plays and poetry began to appear on shelves whence rubbishy novels of a past generation were removed to make room for them. Nor were older books neglected. The general drift of interest was inevitably towards the moderns; but the great poets of the past

were also finding their way in before the end came.

Then, of course, there was a gramophone, with its "popular" and "classical" repertoires; and before the end came, the "classical" had so far surpassed the "popular" in popularity that House piano recitals had begun as well.

Another development was on lines that would have gladdened the heart of Ruskin and Morris, though I do not know that either of these was consciously recognised as an influence. A movement arose for beautifying the studies, which began with pseudo-Japanese lamp-shades, and moved upward through pretty curtains and tablecloths to framed "Medici" pictures. Before the end there was hardly a study that had not its big framed Medici, and often a selection of Medici postcards as well.

All these things involved, of course, some considerable expenditure; but the cost was met with an eagerness astonishing to the boys themselves when they reflected that, a few months before, So-and-so "had never cared about anything but the tuck shop."

Other houses began to catch the spirit of the thing—a trifle reluctantly and tentatively, it

must be admitted, for there is a good deal of improper pride about a school house, and imitations have not quite the glamour of originals. Also the whole movement was by this time falling under a cloud, and it is now time to give some account of the collapse.

CHAPTER II

THE COLLAPSE

"Teachers though they are, Mr. Gollancz and Mr. Somervell do not seem quite to realise . . . what obstacles have to be overcome before the advice given in their little book is generally taken."—*The Westminster Gazette.*

Our account of the collapse of our experiment has to be written, as the reader will easily understand, with a good deal of reserve. "The rise" was the work of ourselves and our pupils. "The collapse" was the work of others. It is not a question of "Dora"; it is not a question of the common law of libel; there are certain older laws of courtesy and forbearance which we would fain observe, for he who has not learnt to observe these has hardly made a beginning with political education. So let it be said to begin with that no one was to blame. Things followed their predestined course, and every actor in the drama played the part that was natural and proper to him. It was natural that the

movement should be destroyed by masters as that its success should be made by boys. If any one is to blame it is ourselves. It was we who chose to pour new wine into old bottles—the preference for old bottles is explained in Chapter VI.—and when the custodians of the bottles awoke to the fact and hastily poured the wine out again, fearing disaster, they certainly thought they were acting for the best. Needless to say, we have often discussed the question whether, had the movement run on other lines, had we been content with rather less to begin with, had we considered principle rather less and prudence rather more, had we added the *rôle* of diplomatist to the *rôle* of missionary, had we hardened our hearts against some of the best boys in order to soften the hearts of some of the more tractable masters—had we done all these things, could we have postponed or even permanently escaped the collapse? On the whole, we come to the conclusion that, much as we regret many plain mistakes of detail, in the main it is best that the bold course was taken. We rode boldly, and, in the last months, we had to ride for a fall. An experiment has been made by frontal attack, and with the slenderest

of resources. Now that all that is over, the time has come to begin the slow and circuitous approach toward political education as a normal institution.

The material of our experiment was boys and boys alone. Now, at first sight, a school might seem to consist of boys, but in point of fact boys are only one element in a complex organisation embracing boys, masters, head master, bursar, governors, and parents. The boys are only there to be educated, and education is a matter about which very few people have any strongly cherished ideas. For very many, public school education is a species of "doing time," whereby a child of fourteen is taken and simply kept out of mischief (or, at any rate, kept away from home, where he would be a nuisance), until at eighteen he is become a man. But the other constituent parts of the school have serious commercial interests at stake. For the masters the school is the means of livelihood, and the livelihood afforded them is in many cases so niggardly that they very rightly consider that the smallest financial mishap to the school might plunge them below the line of bare subsistence. From a slightly different angle, the eyes of the higher

officials and the governors are fixed upon the same point. A head master once remarked to me of one of his governors, "Old X.'s only idea is that the school should pay five per cent."

And the parents. It is an article of faith with the present writers that parents are wiser, more tolerant and more open to ideas on educational matters, than schoolmasters generally suppose. But parents live at a distance, and only make themselves felt at moments of crisis, and then the crisis is one which they probably only very imperfectly understand. That is all the fault of the schools, for the schools have never made a serious attempt to take the parents into partnership in the matter of their sons' education. And here we are back against the root of all evil, for the reason why this has not been done is that the schools have not yet seriously faced the fact that a liberal education for the average boy is an unsolved problem, for the solution of which they need all the help they can possibly get. Of course this taking of the parent into partnership would be no easy matter. Readers of that wise and humorous tale, "The Lanchester Tradition," will remember the comical failure of the head master's attempt at a "Parents'

Committee." Still, all this being so, the fact emerges that the important factor in the problem of the moment is not the real parent but the traditional parent, and the false image of the traditional parent has been created in the schoolmaster's mind by that fussy and ill-informed individual who is always "writing to complain." Now, he who pays the piper does not necessarily call the tune. That would be too absurd. But he has a veto on any tune he too positively dislikes, and it is well known that the unmusical generally dislike a *new* tune.

The opposition to political education developed along two lines. One of them makes this story a microcosm of the world history of the years 1917–1918. The other is something peculiar to the English public schools, and might have befallen at any period since Dr. Arnold inaugurated their modern history.

When we began our experiments the "party truce," in the moral as distinct from the formal sense, still held good. Outside the circles of strict pacifism—and with pacifism in any but a merely abusive sense we never had any concern—English people were agreed upon the great questions of the war. Such differences of opinion

as there were concerned only questions of method and expediency, not questions of principle. The "gospel" of August, 1914, had not yet become a battle-ground disputed by fiercely earnest rival sects. We were Liberals in a general sense, but we differed on a great many topics, and we were genuinely anxious, in the words of one of our pupils in the school magazine, "not so much to advocate any one particular remedy of any given problem as to lay before the class the problems themselves and the principal reforms which have been or are being suggested, so that thought and criticism may have full scope for exercise." It would be unfair to ourselves to admit that we abandoned that ideal, but the events of 1917 brought a new spirit into the world. On the one hand, the early days of the Russian Revolution and the demand for a peace "without annexations or indemnities," coupled with the entry of America and the war speeches of President Wilson, seemed to revive the flagging idealism of the Allies and lift it to a more universal and exalted level than ever before. On the other hand, the publication of the Secret Treaties and the many incomplete revelations that followed thereon, laid bare the fact that

quite another set of motives were also at work among our leaders; that territorial greed and diplomatic hypocrisy were enemies to be fought in our own midst as well as on the battlefield. The issues of the war assumed a grander and a more terrible aspect. More than ever before perhaps in the history of the world—and we do not overlook the period of the so-called religious wars—religion and politics fused. To us, at any rate, the calm aloofness suggested by the quotation above became impossible. A cry seemed to have gone forth, "Who is on the Lord's side? Who?" A great gulf opened up between those who only a year before had believed themselves to be for the time at any rate in one political camp. On one side of that gulf we found ourselves, and on the other most of our colleagues. It was not that we differed from them as to the necessity of winning the war, and of putting forward every possible military effort for that end. But everything depends on the uses to which the victory is put, and the spirit in which it is approached, and there the differences were profound.

And thus the *Politics Class* became a school of liberalism.* It was no intolerant liberalism,

* Generally speaking, the liberalism of *The Manchester Guardian* or of President Wilson's speeches.

for intolerant liberalism is not liberalism at all. From first to last we stood for the examination of all points of view. We were for reading the views of those we disagreed with, not for abusing them unheard or burning their books unread. In so far as some of our pupils carried liberalism to the point of intolerance, they lost the spirit of the movement they professed to support. There were not many against whom this charge could be brought. One of our most ardent democrats, I remember, sent me during the time of his military training a careful and painstaking examination of Mr. Mallock's latest big book. The excuse of those that fell into intolerance must be, I suppose, that they were young, and that they found themselves confronted by an astonishing spectacle of intolerance in some of their "conservative" masters.

When this change was taking place, we sought to redress the balance by taking into partnership in the running of the *Politics Class* a strongly Conservative master. Such an arrangement would have been admirable had the genuine educational spirit been there. It was not. The overture was a failure and only added to our difficulties. To some men it

seemed better to root out the Liberal masters as "traitors" than to co-operate with them as teachers.

On the eve of the final collapse, a similar experiment was tried with *The School Observer*. The last number bears the names of two "editors," and contains both a Liberal and a Conservative "leader" written on the same topic. The innovation was made at the last minute, and the Conservative "leader" is not a genuine schoolboy production, but the model may be a useful one for future work on the same lines.

But there was another influence making for the collapse. We quoted in our previous book a head master who remarked at a school prize-giving that the only questions worth asking are those that cannot get a definite answer. Political education consists almost entirely of such questions. Its sheet anchor is freedom of thought; its method is controversy; its end is not in complete mastery of a box of intellectual tricks such as will win full marks in an examination, but in the modesty of realised ignorance and the enthusiastic search for fresh lights in the darkness. Socrates was put to death by the

Athenians because he would not desist from asking them questions, and it is to be feared that some of our pupils would have incurred the same fate had the customs of the time permitted it. The taste for controversy on the fundamental subjects will grip a youth like the taste for drink, as many who have passed through undergraduate days at Oxford or Cambridge can remember. Suppose a boy enters into political controversy with his form master, over the giving back of an essay, or with his house master at the luncheon table. . . .

Now, there is a Divinity that doth hedge a schoolmaster, and the hedge must be kept in somewhat careful repair. So long as we are concerned with subjects like elementary Latin and Greek or Mathematics, we are dealing with a body of knowledge in which, to take the examinations standard, all the masters get full marks. All knowledge is contained in a set of small school books which the masters, for their sins, know more or less by heart backwards. Even history, if it is sufficiently badly taught, may be grouped among such subjects, for, strange as it may seem, it is quite possible to teach it in such a way that no boy feels

impelled to ask questions either insoluble in themselves or beyond the scope of the master's immediate memory. There are schoolmasters who definitely discourage or even forbid the asking of questions by the class. "Little boys should be seen and not heard"—that worst of all educational maxims—makes a larger contribution to the buttressing up of the present system than is usually supposed. A lowering diet of irregular verbs keeps the boy mind "docile," to use a word of ironically perverted meaning, and prevents it from impinging embarassingly upon the lightly guarded regions of the master's intellectual entrenchments. In fact, political education set up a new intellectual standard. It was a subject in which no one, boy or master, got "full marks,"—scarcely even President Wilson, perhaps, if you took his "work" as a whole! All were learners, all were fellow workers together, and before the vast scope of the task, differences of proficiency between the various workers seemed hardly to matter.

Here, then, rises a difficult question. Ought the schoolmaster to possess, or appear to possess, complete knowledge of the subject he teaches?

The present writer has taught a good variety of subjects during nine years, and on the whole he has found his ignorance, not only of politics, but of far more finite matters, a very helpful educational instrument. As an emergency teacher of Latin on the modern side, for instance, he found it a positive advantage that he had forgotten more of the language than his pupils had ever learnt. His occasional quaint errors did not always pass undetected, and their detection had probably an educational stimulus for the form which outweighed the loss incurred when his mistakes passed without notice. Nor did he feel greatly the loss of intellectual stature. It was partly made good by the ingenuity with which he explained how he had come to make the mistake. And if there was loss in intellectual prestige, there was an increased sense of intellectual comradeship. But this is a trifling and not wholly serious digression.

Some masters stand for intellectual infallibility. These political discussions disturbed them. They felt that their credentials as schoolmasters were being examined and found wanting. They accused the boys of priggery. It was a most false charge, for the boys were enthusiasts, and

enthusiasm is a form of self-forgetfulness as priggery is a form of self-consciousness. Still priggery was the word. The charge of "priggery" was added to the charge of "pacifism."

On these two lines the opposition developed and ultimately triumphed. It was suggested that "the school would be empty in a couple of years," if political education continued. Here, it would seem, our critics were trading on their false idea of the parent, and believing what they wished to believe. Take the statistics of entries, which is the only tangible evidence on the subject, and the only conclusion you can draw is that political education either had no effect at all, or that it slightly increased the commercial well-being of the school. It was not on such ground as this that political education was doomed. As we said at the beginning of the chapter, the material of our experiments was the boys and them alone. We had made a short cut. We had made no effort to convert our colleague. We trusted to results for their conversion. But, as the preceding narrative will have shown, the greater our success, the greater became their irritation, when success was labelled "pacifism" and "priggery." Without

intending it, we had played "Pied Piper" upon some of the best of the house masters' foster children. We had envisaged a school as a single corporate society, boys and masters working together with the maximum of frankness and equality for the common end, education. We had not allowed for the fact that a school cannot become such a corporate society, unless the staff has become such at the same time. Like three-quarters of the reformers of history, we had, in our own despite, become rebels. And so all was over. There is now no *Politics Class*, no *School Observer* in the school of their foundation, though two other schools of fame have started papers on similar lines, with handsome acknowledgments to our example. There are no political societies in the Houses. Two or three of our pupils have left before their time, and we, the authors, are no longer schoolmasters, only "educationists,"—it is a change for the worse.

CHAPTER III

PROPAGANDA

"A point hardly touched on in the book is the difficulty of teaching politics without the disadvantages of partisanship. It is worth discussion."—*Manchester Guardian.*

"If 'politics'—even politics as an art culled from the classics, from *pro-German* * economists and historians, from poets such as Shelley, and from *German* * higher critics of the Bible—were taught to fifth form boys with crude impressionable minds, the result would be Bolshevism. We agree that under careful guidance much of ultimate political value can be taught from history and literature. But it must be done with infinite care, and opinions must be excluded from the teaching. That is the difficulty."—

Contemporary Review.

"Clever boys will learn their politics for themselves."—

Saturday Review.

"The public schools have for years past covered their quiet infiltration of Conservative principles with a camouflage of strict neutrality. Teachers though they are, the authors do not seem quite to realise what a formidable protective device this banning of the modern history which we call politics has been, and what obstacles have to be overcome before the advice given in their little book is generally taken."—*Westminster Gazette.*

Two great objections have to be met if Politics is to become the central subject in our public

* The italics are ours. Why were these two words inserted, we wonder.

school education. The desirability of such a change may be urged from many points of view; and the practical results obtained during the course of our recent experiment seemed to us even more valuable than preliminary theorising had led us to expect. Once make a boy think about the life of his own time and the great principles whose fight for mastery he is witnessing; once make him wonder about the actual machinery by which his world is moved; once set him speculating about the meaning of the universe and of his own existence; and you have created such a spirit of eager enthusiasm and inquiry, that at last that development of the individual personality is achieved which, as every great educationist since Plato has told us, must be the aim of all who desire to be more than mere teachers. Modern History, Politics, Sociology, Economics, Ethics, even *Metaphysics*—we may class all these under the broad heading of Politics, for one and all they deal with the life and destiny of the individual as a member of human society and a part of the Universe. There is no human being who, at least while he is young, does not feel a keen interest in such things; the deepest waters are

stirred and the classroom becomes the meeting-place of minds engaged in an exciting adventure instead of being, as is so often now the case, a prison cell in which all a boy's spontaneity and joy of life are crushed out beyond recall.

Yet the two objections remain, and to one of them we address ourselves in this chapter.* When the possibility of political teaching is considered, the first thought that leaps to the mind is: Can the subject be taught without the introduction of propaganda? and is not Politics just the one subject in which propaganda is above everything undesirable? Now it may be pointed out that the present system of public school education is itself a form of political propaganda none the less effective for being concealed. A boy is sent to a public school with a set of political notions imbibed from his parents and the circle in which he moves, and during the whole period of his boyhood, no genuine effort is made to develop his powers of independent thought and so to enable him to revise his inherited opinions. A certain stimulus no doubt is given to his mental activity by setting him mathematical problems to solve

* The other is dealt with in Chapter V.

and passages in the classical authors to construe; but his thought on political and social questions remains a thing apart, unstirred, atrophied. What else is this but political propaganda? And when it is reinforced by a thousand subtle hints in and out of the classroom, hints suggesting that, of course, there can be no two opinions about so-and-so and his supporters, it becomes one of the most potent instruments of mental darkness that has ever been allowed to function in a rational community.

But the objection to propaganda is not to be met by a "Tu quoque." It is one which raises the most fundamental issues of educational theory. To develop, we are told, and not to mould, is the aim of education; and every genuine educationist will eagerly agree. Yet you cannot develop in a vacuum. You must impart some background for the young mind, give it some material on which to work. How, then, can the compromise be effected? How can we inculcate and yet at the same time aim above every thing at the development of an individuality, which may and indeed must, be so very different from our own? The answer is not

really hard to find. What we inculcate, the background we give, must be considered by us as merely a stop-gap, a poor temporary support which the child may fling away when he can support himself. And even while we are giving the support, we must at every moment be developing the power which will as soon as possible dispense with it.

If this *caveat* is borne in mind and honestly observed, propaganda, whether in political, philosophical, or religious teaching, becomes not only defensible but actually desirable. Nothing can be more fatal than to give the impression that it does not very much matter which of several conflicting principles or policies a boy adopts; that there are after all equally strong arguments on both sides, and that the adhesion of the world to one philosophy of life and code of conduct rather than another will make no very vital difference to anybody. Yet if the teacher presents his subject in a perfectly balanced and passionless manner such a result will inevitably follow. The boy will notice his master's lack of enthusiasm, and consequently remain unenthusiastic himself; and not only will that intellectual eagerness remain undeveloped,

which is as a spark to set his whole nature ablaze, but also he will feel none of that moral passion for principles which is the crying need of the world to-day. A master in another school, which had adopted the idea of a Politics Class, heard of the excitement and controversy which ours was occasioning, and remarked adversely on our methods. "We teach Politics too," he said, "but we are careful that the boys should never be able to discover on which side our own sympathies lie. Consequently there is no excitement and no controversy. Politics are thought of in just the same way as any other school subject." We can well believe it. Our whole idea, of course, is that they should not be so thought of; that they should be regarded rather as a matter of most vital interest and importance both for the boy himself and for the world as a whole. We would have a boy feel an attachment to principles as romantic and absorbing as his affections for his dearest friend, not coldly cancel one principle against the other as if he were doing a sum in mathematics.

But it is time that we explained exactly what we mean when we say that a master should not shrink from propaganda in political teaching.

We do not by any means intend that he should state only his own point of view, and pass over the arguments that may be urged against it. That would be the merest parody of education. Rather do we mean that he should adopt a threefold method. He should put forward his own view with all the enthusiasm that he feels for it (we have been called "missionaries" by way of abuse, but find nothing but honour in the word); simultaneously, he should impress on his pupils the fact that it after all *is* only his view, and urge them not merely to accept but to examine and criticise; and finally, he should explain with complete honesty every point that has been, or possibly could be, raised against it. We call this method "propaganda," because a fire is imparted to the statement of one side which cannot, from the nature of the case, be imparted to that of the other; but it is propaganda in which there is no touch of dishonesty or obscurantism.

We have said that, while he is presenting his case, the master should be urging his pupils to examine and criticise it. But he should do more than this; if he is a Liberal, he should spend much of his time in a direct propaganda

of the great Liberal principles—freedom of thought and discussion; the sanctity of the individual conscience; the paramount importance of moral and intellectual independence. In this way he will be creating a habit of mind which will *naturally* criticise; and so by his propaganda of general liberalism he will annihilate the vantage-point he would otherwise occupy in his propaganda of particular principles and policies.

We speak of "liberal education," and surely the epithet is meaningless unless it be taken to imply that conversion to those general principles is the very bed-rock of education. But others think otherwise, and so we would point out the broad distinction which must be drawn between propaganda of the simple liberal and propaganda of the simple reactionary principle—on the one hand freedom of thought, on the other acceptance of ideas not one's own. Our liberal propaganda carries with it the instrument of its own overthrow. If you can inspire a boy with a desire to put all things to the test of his own free conscience, you are empowering him to criticise everything you teach—even that very liberty of opinion, a

belief in which you have been so anxious to create. But with reactionary propaganda it is quite otherwise. By it a static habit of mind is produced—a habit of mind which, except by way of a mercifully not uncommon revolt, is a pawn in the hands of its present teacher, and that public opinion which in time to come will take its teacher's place.

A word may be added on the means best calculated to produce the free mind at which we are aiming. Use, of course, can and should be always made of the fundamental arguments (all to be found in Mill) in favour of liberty of opinion. But there is one case in which the employment of a subsidiary method may give even more valuable results. Where a boy holds tenaciously to an opinion which you think to be evil, argue against it unceasingly; show him the errors of it; point out passionately the beauty of its alternative. The stronger his conviction, the better; indeed, deliberately choose his deepest-seated prejudice—attack him in the very heart of what you regard as his error. Then, when at last he sees that the opinion which he had thought of as the only possible one is in reality wrong, and that another which

he had loathed is in reality right, a tremendous intellectual conversion will have taken place; his own case will constantly act as a warning to him whenever he is again tempted to prejudice or narrowness of outlook.

CHAPTER IV

CONTROVERSY

"While a formidable strife between masters of different creeds might be engendered, it is arguable that the finest political spirit might be fostered by approaching the problems under the conditions of fairness and courtesy on which the public schools pride themselves." *—*Manchester Guardian.*

"Tolerance, to be more than a pale and negative virtue, needs to be based on an understanding of these different points of view, which means, again, bringing an educated mind to bear on them." —*Westminster Gazette.*

"Boys always will be boys" they say, and the saying can be interpreted in many ways. "Masters always will be masters" is a more sobering reflection. The reputation of schoolmasters for sweet reasonableness has never stood, perhaps, particularly high. Even supposing that, with a staff of angels, such a scheme of teaching as that sketched in the preceding chapter were desirable, will not the actual result be something very different? Will

* Is there a little irony here?

not "a formidable strife between masters of different creeds be engendered," and will not the spectacle of that strife, and a possible participation in it, be the very worst possible training for the new generation?

The difficulty is one that has got to be faced, and the present writers, at any rate, are not at all likely to overlook it. As was shown in Chapter II., our experiments collapsed not because our colleagues differed from us in political opinion, but because, differing from us in political opinion, they also differed from us in educational theory. Had the experiment collapsed simply because they differed from us in political opinion, it would be no use pursuing the subject of political education further; for a staff in which all the masters held the same political views would be unlikely to exist, and in any case altogether undesirable. We may take it for granted that the staff will consist of men of diverse political opinions. Indeed we may go further and take it for granted that in a school in which political education flourishes, those diversities, though certainly less bitter, will be more clearly marked than at present. In such a school the masters, for the most part, will be

keenly interested in politics, for the school must be a single society of men and boys in real intellectual co-operation. What is good for the boys will be good for the masters. Perverse metaphors comparing masters and boys to hounds and hares will be seen as the symptom of a radically false educational philosophy.

If political education becomes not merely an experiment but an integral part of the time-table, the staff as a whole, not necessarily all the masters, but all those concerned with what are at present ironically called "the humanities," will be taking a part in it. But how can this be worked? We are here faced with a problem such as none of the ordinary school subjects has ever raised, at any rate in this acute form. Everything depends upon the educational philosophy of the staff. Everything depends upon the extent of their belief in freedom of opinion.

The case for freedom of opinion, like the case for self-government, has suffered from the fact that we take the theory so completely for granted that we do not notice how far we are removed from the practice of it. Freedom is supposed to be an Englishman's speciality.

"Britons never shall be slaves," we say, and suppose that settles the matter. Very likely Thomson, when he wrote his feeble verses (they have been redeemed by an excellent tune), never paused to reflect that the sailors he was glorifying were mostly victims of the press-gang. It is but a step from a press-gang to a Press Bureau. Most Englishmen are not very anxious to tolerate any opinions but their own, if the subject be one that they deem of vital importance. Very few have the faith of the great apostles of freedom, the conviction that right opinion can only triumph through fair and open conflict with the wrong.

The cause of freedom, then, fares badly enough in the world outside, when we are only concerned with its application to those who have reached "years of discretion." Inside the school the difficulties are admittedly greater, and freedom has hitherto had a poor chance. Yet without freedom, though there may be instruction, there can hardly be education.

In so far then as the staff fall short in this vital matter of toleration, they must themselves go to school and learn; and he is probably a poor teacher who is not himself ever learning

something more. Here perhaps the head master might find one of his finest opportunities. The conscientious modern head master often finds it hard to rise above the mass of administrative work attached to his office. He resembles Philip II. of Spain, of whom it was said that he was always trying to be his own private secretary. Meanwhile his assistants go their own ways, each narrowing into his own little intellectual groove. The result, at any rate in the more remote and less distinguished schools—that is to say, the vast majority—is a society far from idyllic. Even if politics were to engender "a formidable strife," the discords would not be breaking in upon any very beautiful harmonies. Two novels have recently been written by schoolmasters about their profession, and even if "Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill" may be discounted as the ill-natured revenge of a clever man who had mistaken his profession, "The Lanchester Tradition" has, we believe, been generally hailed as a truthful record. Masters at many schools have exclaimed, "How on earth does this Rugby man come to know all about *us?*" Teaching is spiritual work or it is nothing, and the head master ought to be, as

the greatest head masters have been, a true leader of his staff in spiritual things.

Our profession is the most insanely individualistic in the world. Probably the teaching of every subject would be improved by the establishment of a really organised co-operation between the various masters teaching it, and "politics," with its strong human appeal would, with a leader worthy of his position, be the best place to begin. Masters would meet for a genuine educational purpose—and the last thing ever discussed at the masters' meetings we have attended has been educational principles—they would learn to see into each others' minds and methods, enlarge their intellectual sympathies and understand their differences. Thus a real corporate intellectual life of the staff might begin. Often at present this does not exist, and its absence is fatal to the school as a seriously intellectual institution.

And surely the need for the tolerant staff can hardly be exaggerated. And here we are thinking not so much of the war and its controversies as of the days that will follow. After the war a baser motive than even the crudest jingo patriotism will claim a monopoly over the

political thought of public schoolboys for the defence not of "country," but of property. The unorthodox will be denounced not as "pacifists," but as "socialists," and the enemy will be not the Kaiser, but perhaps the Prime Minister of a Labour Government. But just as the only hope for the world after the war seems to lie in a League of Nations, so the only hope for England lies in the co-operation of all classes in a common search for industrial justice. The public schools are "class preserves" of the rich, and their opportunity for good, as for harm, will be almost boundless. "To turn out the young of the capitalist class with all their capitalist prejudices intact will be sheer dereliction of duty on the part of public schoolmasters." So wrote a great teacher of the older generation. The obvious way of destroying those prejudices *as prejudices* is by an enthusiastic and capable exposition of various forms of socialism. This can best be done by socialist masters. But, supposing the socialist teaching is false, why should those who are not Socialists fear for the result? It is a necessary part of the scheme that they on their side should make a reasoned defence of a reformed capitalism. If this is done "the young of the

capitalist class" may be turned out Socialists or anti-Socialists, but at least they will go out into the world men of some economic understanding, with views based on reasoning, and by further reasoning or experience liable to be changed, not men with inherited prejudice intact.

If we assume in our staff a general inclination towards freedom of opinion, everything becomes possible. A hundred questions of organisation arise, essentially practical questions, and more easily solved by concrete experiment than by literary methods. It may, however, be worth while to glance at a few of these.

Masters will always be human; and political education must be so organised as to suggest in every way that the masters of divergent views are co-operating in a general scheme of political education such as no one of them alone could impart, not competing for the political allegiance of the boys. A school is not a bye-election in permanent session. Thus, though a controversial element is bound to come into political education, we would mitigate this element by not allowing any one form to go to more than one master for political work. The boy will pass from form to form, and thus the conservatism of a summer

term will be tempered by the radicalism of the following winter. But these political compartments will not be particularly air-tight in any case. The house master will be a permanent influence, and when a keen-witted boy has just got out of the form of a sympathetic master, it is unlikely that they will altogether lose touch with one another.

At the top of the school, however, the controversial element should be more frankly accepted. We believe in the permanent institution of a voluntary *Politics Class* in which the best boys will hear again the best of the masters who have taught them on their way up the school. Between such a *Politics Class* and a really efficient school Debating Society it might be hard to draw a precise line. One would play into the hands of the other.

The "judicial" teacher, the man who from an Olympian elevation surveys the political strivings of past and present alike, and analyses, catalogues, and defines, creating all the while an impression of luminous impartiality, may, of course, do much good work. The present writer would be the last man to deny it when he remembers his own debt to a teacher of that

kind. None the less, we believe that it is the other kind of teaching that is really needed in the schools of the well-to-do to-day.* The political problems of our time are of intense and terrible importance: on their solution this way or that depends the happiness or the misery of uncounted millions; and it is so largely on the way that the young of the privileged classes learn to look at them that their solution depends. "Judicial" teaching creates the impression that so long as you "know the case" for or against a policy, it does not matter whether you believe it, and as for acting upon it, or making sacrifices for it, there is no question of doing anything so "extreme." Education *must* create enthusiasm.

It must also make for many-sidedness, and so we arrive at the function of the staff, the many-sided staff of enthusiasts. Let each one believe himself, if he is young enough to do so,

* Whether any particular single school can afford to experiment in such teaching is, of course, another matter altogether. Gallio is a less troublesome colleague than Paul, and Paul will waste his breath if he complains of the obvious fact that such things are so. But he has a better ground of complaint when he sees himself silenced, while Sosthenes is allowed to carry on as vigorously as he pleases.

the monopolist of political truth. Let each one differ from all his colleagues on every subject under the sun, except two, the infinite possibilities of the boys he teaches, and the infinite importance of freedom of opinion.

CHAPTER V

CAPTURE BY THE STATE

"It is a great and perilous discovery that the State can [as in Germany] impress the minds of masses of men by a carefully organised system of political education, and we hope the authors will bear it in mind."—*Westminster Gazette.*

"Germany has shown the world to what evil ends the dishonest use of schools and schoolmasters must lead."—*Contemporary Review.*

We have discussed the pros and cons of propaganda—the propaganda, that is to say, by each master of his particular point of view—and have concluded that, if certain safeguards are adopted and honestly adhered to, such propaganda is desirable. But there is one particular form of propaganda which no one, if he has any reverence at all for the individuality of his pupils and the freedom of the world, can regard as anything but an abomination. And here we meet with the most serious criticism which can be, and has been, levelled against the project of political education. Suppose, it has

been urged, that your scheme is adopted by a number of the public schools; suppose that by a steady process of attack, this new and very powerful piece of machinery is captured by the State, as a means of imposing orthodoxy on the nation and nipping in the bud a great part of our potential vigour and independence; have you not then defeated most disastrously your own object, and desiring above everything more liberty in thought and more self-reliance in action, merely succeeded in setting up a system similar to that which created the national character of modern Germany?

It is at first sight a most damaging criticism; and a criticism which seems to gather weight as we look about us and observe the terrible results which have occurred when the State has been allowed to manipulate opinion for its own ends. No Englishman will need to have the lesson of Germany brought home to him; he knows too well how inculcation through the schools of the worst type of narrow patriotism, rendered seemingly noble by a deliberate falsification of history, has warped the generosity which all children, German or other, possess, into a pitiful acquiescence in every form of intellectual

and moral vileness. But in England, too, the danger signals are not wanting. We have observed the people falling more and more under the sway of one man's ideas, carried by his Press into every town and village of the countryside: we have noticed that complete independence does not appear always to exist as between the Press and the men who are responsible for the gravest acts of public policy; and some of us do not much like what we have seen. Are we then to help forward the forces making for our own Prussianisation? We desire to see Politics taught by masters of every shade of political opinion, so that the boys may have all the materials from which to form an independent judgment; but will not the State see to it, as it grows more and more powerful, that only those men are allowed to become, or to remain, schoolmasters, who will teach a doctrine not abhorrent to the powers that be? Those who know the public schools will not be at a loss to understand how such a consummation could be achieved. Even now there is the pressure of parents, members of the financial or political wing of the ruling class—a pressure few head masters are big enough to resist. And

in the future—to take only one instance—may not Conscription remain, and the Government exercise a direct control through the medium of the O. T. C. ?

And as one writes these words ; as one sees the ghastly prospect of more and more State control, more and more authoritarianism and docility, less and less of the free co-operation which is the very life-blood of society, one sees also that the only way in which we can prevent the remedy we have proposed from becoming another instrument in the hands of our enemies, is simply by adopting that remedy itself. We must break in on the vicious circle while and how we can. For why is there a danger of our instrument of education being turned into an instrument of obscurantism ? Only because there is a danger of our whole society becoming rotten to the core ; only because there is a danger of the present cleavage between the two English nations becoming wider and wider, until we have, on the one hand, a class ruling in the interests of money and privilege, and, on the other, a slaving and possibly pampered proletariate. And unless a start is made here and now with the political education of Europe—unless boys and

girls are made to think politically while their generosity and idealism is still untainted by motives of personal profit, and their powers of vital thought not yet decayed by disuse—these and worse things will happen; love, tolerance, and the independence which is the birthright of men, will all be engulfed in a mad welter of personal, class, and national selfishness. In such a society it really would not matter very much if political education *were* captured by the State; and the only way, as it seems to us, of preventing its advent is by getting up a system of political education. For by political education we are creating the only possible safeguard against a misuse of it—we are creating a society which will not *desire* to misuse it.

And so we would make, if we may, an appeal to all who are considering what their future work shall be, and to those also who may be finding their present work unprofitable—we would urge them to become schoolmasters. We like sometimes to think of a little Greek army of devoted warriors—a band of five hundred young men, who will go into the public schools and there gradually help to set up a system of political education. The word "Greek" is not

out of place. For there is something about the sunlit freshness of a cricket field—something too, about the boys, belonging for the most part to a class which, with all its faults, has a great tradition of public service behind it—that brings before the mind a gathering of Greek humanity in the smiling peace of a Greek country place. It is idle to pretend that a man of ability who goes into the schoolmastering profession does not have to make many sacrifices. His salary is usually miserable; his chances of a head mastership must be at present in inverse ratio to the vigour with which he acts on the principles he believes in, for these posts are mostly reserved for the "safe," as the debates of the Head Masters' Conference used to show, until, a few years ago, that body very wisely decided to exclude reporters. But the compensations are enormous. He will live all his life close to boys whom, when he once gets to know them, he will find to have a freshness and high-heartedness which will be a constant source of hope and inspiration; he will have the joy of watching their minds develop, and of feeling that it is due in some measure to him that they are growing into makers of happiness for themselves and the

world. And when in his work he is met by the opposition of those who misinterpret or misunderstand, he will have an almost fierce satisfaction in the faith that the future may be all on his side, and that many years hence a little of him will live in men who have realised not his, but their, individuality, and that potentiality for goodness which, as well as he was able, he fostered and brought to the light.

We have both been schoolmasters; at the moment we are neither of us anything so useful; and we feel that we can say quite dogmatically that there is no happiness equal to that of the profession that was ours. And both of us fell into it accidently, as so many others have done. Yet the appeal for schoolmasters should surely not be based entirely or even mainly on the idyllic picture of the happy schoolmaster. John Stuart Mill reduced hedonism to its fundamental paradox when he declared that the way to find happiness was to turn your back on it. If there is one lesson which political education rightly conducted cannot fail to impress upon its best boys, it is the crying need of the schools for their services. From Plato and Aristotle down to the latest treatises on Reconstruction,

be it the "Principles of Reconstruction," as laid down by Mr. Bertrand Russell, or the "Elements of Reconstruction," as reprinted from *The Times* with an introduction by Lord Milner, all alike come round to education as the keystone of the arch of politics. The final appeal is always to the schoolmaster, and it is perhaps less hopeful to appeal to the actual schoolmaster of to-day than to the possible schoolmaster of to-morrow. As are our schools, so will be our Parliaments and our Civil Service, and some at any rate who have mapped out for themselves a career of political usefulness and honour in Westminster, Whitehall, or abroad, might bethink themselves first of Banquo.

> "Lesser than Macbeth and greater:
> Not so happy yet much happier:
> Thou shalt get kings though thou be none."

CHAPTER VI

THE MAKING OF "POLITICIANS"

"The way the authors wish to realise their ideal would, I fear, merely increase the output of politicians and political journalists, of whom an adequate supply already exists."—Mr. E. B. Osborn, in *The Morning Post*.

SHARP-WITTEDNESS playing on ignorance to the end of personal advancement—so dominant a feature has this become of our political life, that any protest against the misuse of a noble word, when men speak contemptuously of politics, is no doubt quite untimely. Untimely, because it is too early, not because it is too late. We retain the word ourselves, and call the kind of education we advocate political education; appropriately it seems to us, for we believe that its wide adoption would remove the root cause which has made such a stigma possible, and free the very name of politics from the indignities it now justly suffers.

Nothing, indeed, could be wider of the mark than the notion that a system of political educa-

tion would increase the number of self-seeking, power-hunting "politicians." Such men are the product, not of political education, but of the lack of it. What is the present situation? To the ordinary boy, politics, when it first obtrudes itself on his attention, appears under one or other of two aspects. If he is clever, or is imagined to be so by ambitious parents, or again, if, though stupid, he happens to belong to a political family, the air begins to be thick with talk of his "going into" politics. He is to "go into" politics in the same way as men "go into" the Stock Exchange or the law; by virtue either of birth or brains he is to enter one of those little strongholds of his class, and earn his living there by playing the appropriate game.

This is the guise under which politics appears to one type of boy. The other type, hears in some quarter or other a babble about income-tax and little navies and big loans; and either dismisses the whole thing as "absolute rot," which can have no possible meaning for him, or imbibes the ideas and prejudices of the people whose talk he is listening to, without in the least understanding their implications.

From these two types is developed the great bulk of the population, considered under its political aspect. On the one side, politicians, whether clever or stupid; on the other, the electorate, ignorant and apathetic, or prejudiced and inflammable, as the case may be. There are, of course, other classes too. There is the man who has made money in business, and late in the day conceives the idea of entering Parliament—which he sometimes succeeds in doing even when he has been unable to avoid making an election speech or two. There is the idealist who takes up political work with the sole object of doing useful service. There is the well-informed and open-minded student of public affairs. There is the intellectualist. But the great majority are as we have described them.

The introduction of a far-reaching system of political education would have three results, each of which would reinforce the others in putting an end to the present state of affairs. Make every one a politician, and "politicians" will become rare. Politics will cease to be an essentially specialised profession; men will no longer "go into" it as into a thing apart. Some will administer, guide, and direct; others

will know and criticise. But every one will be politically active; and instead of the stronghold of politics in a desert of ignorance, there will be that interplay of political functions, distributed among the whole body of the people, which is the real meaning of democracy.

And not only will politics cease to be a preserve, kept ready for spoliation by the clever, the pushing, the rich, and the well-born, but also the very desire in these men so to misuse their citizenship will cease altogether to come to birth. For political education, properly so called, awakens political idealism; it teaches principles, arouses aspirations after public service. The "politician" is a man who finds in political intrigue the fruitful source of his own advancement; one who catches at every breeze to further his personal ends. But if politics had formed the basis of his education; if, while his idealism was still untainted, he had been led to consider fundamental principles, and to examine public affairs in the light of them: then the potential goodness of his political nature would have been so fully realised, that no vain or mean thing would disfigure his maturity. "Ah, but 'potential goodness' and 'while his

idealism was still untainted' ; there's the rub," we hear the cynic saying. Such criticism moves us not at all. We had to do during the course of our experiment with a great number of boys of many different types ; one can recall hardly a case in which, when vital thought had really been awakened, often after much sweat and agony, virtue was not found to be the fundamental characteristic of the boy's intellectual nature. But the teacher must not, of course, rest satisfied until he is certain that the goal in very truth has been reached ; until he is sure that his pupil has thrown off the weight of carelessness, thoughtlessness, and prejudice, and that his mind is really awake and is in actual contact with ideas.

Finally, just as the leader and administrator will not desire to misuse his powers, so the education of the rest of the nation will deprive him of his opportunity. For it is only among a people politically uneducated that corruption and intrigue on a grand scale can exist. The unscrupulous creation and manipulation of public opinion ; the concealment of low and mean designs under an appearance of nobility and disinterestedness ; the putting forward of one

argument in support of a policy, while a thousand are kept back which weaken or invalidate it; the appeal to prejudice and blind passion; the cunning use of suggestion; worst of all that pitiable game which consists of turning the people's noblest instincts—instincts of fellowship, solidarity, romance—to the basest ends; marks of degradation such as these would vanish gradually but surely as knowledge and power of criticism spread to every section of the community. Such evil motives as still existed would be seen through and exposed; events would be regarded, not as isolated occurrences, but as a part of history, to be viewed in their relation to the whole and to be judged in accordance with a definite philosophy of life. So that if, here and there, a "politician" survived or made his reappearance in the clearer atmosphere, he would find his playthings gone; waiting instead for him would be men, citizens, politicians —ready to sweep him aside and gaily choose a better man.

CHAPTER VII

PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND FREAK SCHOOLS

THE Radical—and by the Radical we mean any one who sees that life for the majority at the present time is not as fine and happy as it should be, and who is determined to leave no stone unturned to make it so—commonly looks askance at the public schools. He thinks of them, rightly, as the stronghold of those in possession, the class which, as a whole, not only opposes such fundamental reforms as would result in a fairer distribution of wealth, but also itself has failed to do what might conceivably justify its favoured position, to keep alive, by virtue of special opportunities such as would disappear in a society based on equality, the finest ideas of which the race is capable. Individual and national power, privilege, commercialism—it is on these things that it has set its eyes in its leadership of the nation. And so

our fellow-radicals have more than once said to us, "If you are really keen on education, why don't you start a school of your own?"

Now it is, no doubt, difficult for any one who has fallen under the sway of a public school, and who has been so caught up by its fascination as to feel for it a love more compelling than anything in his life, to be certain that personal predilections do not dictate a reply unjustified by intellectual considerations. Yet for all that we give our answer without hesitation. For the multiplication of what may be conveniently, if somewhat unkindly, classed together as "freak" schools, breaks no fresh ground at all. Boys who have been brought up in an "intellectualist" atmosphere, and those alone, are sent there; and even if there were no schools to which they could be sent, home influence would turn them out intellectualists still. The ranks of the intellectualists, in fact, are recruited from three main sources. First, there are the sons of intellectualists, sent either to a freak school or to no school at all; secondly, sons of intellectualists of a slightly different type, sent to a public school yet nevertheless retaining in the new environment their

own peculiar stamp; and thirdly, the clever sons of "ordinary" parents, sent to a public school and becoming intellectualists by revolt against the philistinism of it and of their homes. The community thus composed leads a life as distinct and separate from that of the rest of the nation as was ever lived by the "Intelligentzia" in Russia's darkest hour. It has hardly a point of contact with the average Englishman; it does not understand his revues and musical comedies, his novels and cinemas, his hunting and race meetings; it speaks a different language, thinks altogether different thoughts. And being itself not in the least understood, it has acquired a certain hardness of mind, a certain contempt for ordinary people and ordinary things, which has widened the gulf, and led to mutual suspicion and sometimes even hatred. Inevitably its mental health has been affected by such a situation. Feeling itself different, it has consciously made itself as different as possible; intellectual extravagances indulged in from mere bravado, these and similar stigmata of balance lost and sanity impaired have made their appearance in varying degrees at one time or another. Under a

different set of circumstances—those of the war, for instance, so far as concerns a section of the group of which we are speaking—there has been a pitiful relapse into mere boredom, cynicism, and inactivity; remote from the passions of the crowd, and unable to give service to a cause in which they disbelieve, some of our cleverest men have provided an English parallel with the vodka-drinking, bridge-playing, and unutterably tired community of highly-developed intellects which Tchekoff describes so brilliantly.

Now, in saying all this we would not have it thought that we are bringing a sweeping accusation against one section of the nation. For the fault lies, not mainly with them, but with the lack of culture, idealism, and genuine education which characterises England (and most other countries) to-day. In a country in which regard for things of the mind and spirit was the rule and not the exception, these men would form the backbone of the nation; they would develop along healthy lines, be marked by love and sympathy instead of contempt, use their great powers to the full in the public service. What they are to be blamed for is their failure to see their real duty; their

failure to understand that it is among the philistines, and not in their own exclusive set, that their most important work lies. Some of them, of course, do understand this, and spend their lives in an unselfish attempt to spread light in the darkness. But even so they commonly speak a language which is not understood; and inevitably they fail to achieve any widespread result.

It is not, then, in the multiplication of schools designed to cater for intellectualists that we see the best hope for the progress of the nation. We see it rather in the creation of an army of missionaries from among the ordinary men themselves; missionaries of thought about the great problems of life and society, fashioned out of those who are of the people and understand and sympathise with their emotions. When once the average, revue-loving, thoughtless, "sporting" public school boy has been taught to think vigorously about politics and sociology; when once he has been so fired with enthusiasm for these things that he will teach and talk to others of his kind: then, at last, slowly and painfully no doubt, but none the less inevitably, will war, poverty, and materialism vanish altogether from

a world not meant for them. That is why we have ventured to urge all those who both are idealists and love the public schools—but those alone—to break in on them and help to awaken the great sleeping instrument of salvation.

And they will find good material awaiting them. The English public school boy shares with all the youth of all the nations an immense store of latent idealism, which can be brought to a splendid fruition if atrophy and decay are not allowed to overtake it. But he possesses other things also, over and above this common heritage. The intellectualist has often got beyond the big ideas, if such a paradox may be allowed; they have been for so long the platitudes of his caste, and he has grown so hopeless of their general acceptance, that he has turned to a search after subtle refinements and intellectual novelties, in the course of which much generous breadth of vision has been lost. Again, many working-class reformers—can it be wondered?—not only bring to their task a bitterness against the world which has so misused them and their fellows, but also have inevitably been cut off from those gentle manners of life which have been gradually evolved by the more fortunate to express,

however imperfectly, the feeling for grace and beauty which it should be our aim, not to crush, but to extend to all. But with the public school boy all is different. Once he has begun to think in any real sense of the word, his intellectual life develops as joyfully and naturally as does the physical life of the beasts of the field. Freshly and spontaneously, and with no trace of self-consciousness or affectation, he leaps to greet ideas and principles, between which and his own true nature there is a glorious bond of kinship. We have seen boy after boy, as he realises, for instance, the meaning of Liberty, and gets his first glimpse of the wide country which such a realisation opens up, experiencing an emotion of happiness which we can only compare to the catch of breath with which men see great scenes of beauty, or hear of lovely deeds of generosity and heroism. Given their chance, public school boys (not one or two, but great masses of average humanity) will rediscover for themselves the simple things which Christ and Plato taught; and once that is achieved a general advance all along the line toward the goal of a worthy human society may begin.

CHAPTER VIII

MORALITY

"Generally speaking, the intellectualist phase [of a boy's career] is remarkably brief. Just occasionally its morals are such as to cause the swift expulsion of its leaders. More often they leave in the natural course of things, or grow weary of their pose —which has, indeed, not made them popular—and return after the holidays frankly and unaffectedly Philistine. This transient fashion is not new. What is new is the deliberate encouragement given to it by a certain type of assistant master. We do not imply that the wise master will suppress . . . That kind of intellectual measles will work itself out . . . But to leave the phase alone is one thing; deliberately to foster and give it official backing is quite another."—*The Church Times.*

When the morality of the public schools is being discussed, attention is usually concentrated almost exclusively on that particular branch of morality which is concerned with sex. Nor is this unnatural; for sex plays so important a part in the life of a growing boy, and the development of his character is so closely bound up with the development of his physical nature, that the determining part may be very easily

confused with the whole. Yet there are many boys who are sexually virtuous, but filled with the worst type of hardness and intolerance; many, too, who are sexually vicious, yet full of love and sympathy. To imagine that the problem of public school morality is solved as soon as we have discovered the best method of making public school boys continent, is to look at the matter from an altogether too narrow angle; for the sins of the spirit, we have been told, are more unpardonable than the sins of the flesh.

Nevertheless, when we have said this, as say it we must, the fact remains that the sex question is one of overwhelming importance. For if once self-indulgence is allowed to become firmly rooted in a boy's character, in the majority of cases it will be ineradicable; and he will either be the victim throughout a great part of his life of temptations which he loathes, and which will be a constant source of unhappiness to him, or he will end by acquiescing in a manner of life which is degrading, it may be to himself alone, it may be both to himself and others. It will be urged, of course, as it has been urged against every school novel which has attempted to give

a true picture of the "manners" of a school house, that we are grotesquely exaggerating the whole business; that there may be a problem in the case of this boy or that, but that in general there is no problem at all. This simply will not do. There *is* a problem, and a very grave one; and we had better anticipate the possibility of being misunderstood by stating very directly what it is. We believe that the number of cases in which boys have undesirable relationships with one another is not very large, but we believe also that there is a very great deal of that purely personal self-indulgence, that purely self-regarding licentiousness, which is the cause of so much unhappiness in boyhood.

But the reader will already be asking, "What is all this to do with political education?" The connection is a close one. For the prevalence of this particular form of immorality may be ascribed to two main causes. At some time during early adolescence the majority of boys automatically become acquainted with the sensation of sex, and, as part of a natural process, try to reproduce the pleasurable experience. But why do so many of these repeat and repeat the process, until the thing becomes a habit for

which they can find no escape? Partly because the verbal warning which is given to them by parents and masters is made in a wrong form, and partly because there is not that constant joy and romance in their daily lives in comparison with which temptation, when it comes, will appear sordid and unworthy. In the second place, there is an atmosphere in the houses of tolerance towards these practices, accompanied by constant discussion, sometimes open, sometimes secret, which encourages and not rarely actually suggests them. This is certainly true of many houses in many schools. The house prefects, it is true, usually try to suppress as much of the unhealthiness as they can; but since, on the one hand, they are often known to have been "as bad as any one" in their day, and on the other they use the method of pretending that these are things which no decent boy could possibly be guilty of, they meet at best with a very partial success, derived only from the fear which they inspire.

The common method of dealing with the evil is a system of "talks" by masters and heads of houses. The "talks" follow a fairly stereotyped plan: they are either religious in

nature, and contain references to "the temple of the body," or medical, and convey warnings of the physical consequences which will follow if excess is persisted in. Sometimes the two types of address are dovetailed into a single whole. Neither are wholly satisfactory. The medical variety sometimes terrifies a sensitive boy, who will imagine that his whole life is ruined and all his chance of future happiness wrecked. He will become somewhat morose, and not unfrequently will finally turn, in his despair, to the very thing against which he has been warned. On the other hand, and with another type of boy, it often fails equally disastrously, because, judged by the medical standards to which it appeals, it is proved by experience to be unsound. In his anxiety to create a strong impression the schoolmaster will sometimes make statements that are simply untrue. He will tell the boy that these practices will ruin his cricket or his football. No doubt it sometimes will; but it is more than likely that the boy knows several highly successful athletes who are, as the boy knows, though the master may not, complete adepts in schoolboy vice. Then there is the old threat, possibly obsolete to-day, though

one hesitates to say that anything is obsolete in the conservative world with which we deal—the old threat that half the inmates of the asylums of England have been brought there by this practice. That, again, is simply untrue, and if the boy happens to know it, the effect of such an untruth upon him may be very bad. Equally unsuccessful, in the majority of cases, is the religious talk. The unspeculative, dogmatic type of school religion does not make an appeal to the ordinary boy sufficiently strong to override what he has found to be the most fascinating thing in his experience. It is too much a conventional decency imposed upon him from without, too little a force within him which he has been helped to develop, such as is alone powerful enough to contend with a desire itself arising spontaneously from within. And when the sermon is accompanied by exhortations to pray against temptation, it is sometimes not only useless, but (again in the case of the ordinary boy) positively harmful. For to get into the habit of praying against temptation means to get into the habit of thinking about it, to become self-conscious, and to succumb. Not but that there are some quite young boys who feel

Christ's nearness to them as Friend and Helper so vividly that they can gain real strength from praying to Him. But we are talking of the average boy; and the average boy is not of this type.

Conversations between master and boy on the subject are, of course, quite necessary and often very helpful. Very often a boy is mystified, or it may be terrified, by what seems to him some peculiarity in his nature, and it may do him all the good in the world to unburden his soul to some one older and more experienced than himself. It is best, too, that the House master should be the man to whom such a boy naturally turns; though if the boy should prefer to turn elsewhere, the fact should be to the House master food for thought rather than for anger. Indeed, while in one way there is far too much talk on this subject, in another there is far too little. Too much may easily be made of conventional "talks" on conventional occasions. What is rather wanted is a relationship between boy and master, created by frank intercourse on other topics, such as will naturally bring the boy to the master for help in these difficulties, with the sure knowledge that the latter will not

"lecture" him, but will speak as one who has been through similar difficulties in his own boyhood, and is anxious only to help and to explain.

Under the present system, when the verbal appeal fails, recourse is often had to corporal punishment. We have no room here for a discussion of the ethics of punishment; but a method more foolish could scarcely be devised, if the aim is to enable the boy to overcome temptation. And of all forms of punishment, corporal punishment is the worst. The physical side of the boy's nature is asserting itself in all its strength; and you attempt to combat it by making a physical appeal which must from the nature of the case be far less powerful and compelling. Moreover, any one with even a slight knowledge of sexual psychology (and it is curious how few schoolmasters take the trouble to acquire such knowledge) is aware that given a certain temperament on the part whether of the giver or the receiver, perils lurk in this form of punishment of the very type which it is designed to meet.

But the only sound way of combating the over-development of one side of a boy's nature is to develop the other. Make a boy's whole

life one of joy and interest; let him live with a constant sense of the beauty of grass and sky, of the exultation of vital work, of the happiness of love and friendship. As the days go by, let him feel his latent powers developing, and glory in the thought that they have been given him for his own joy and that of humanity. Then when temptation comes to him, and he remembers how its indulgence has left him slack and bored, it will seem to him like a candle-flame in the sun of his happiness, a wretched little mean and unworthy thing breaking in on and threatening to ruin the peace and harmony of his life. And so he will not give it a second thought, and soon all danger will be over. This may seem preposterously difficult. It is: but it is also the only way. The master cannot do it for the boy, but he can perhaps give the boys some help towards doing it for themselves.

What we want is that every house should become a small community of boys carrying on together absorbingly interesting and romantic activities—a kind of club in which they may forgather and undertake in common the intellectual and spiritual adventure which thus become a part of their individual daily lives.

In this way there will be none of that boredom, that feeling of "having nothing on earth to do or think about," the presence of which is the chief cause impelling a boy to turn to the one thing which at least can provide him at any moment with a temporary excitement. Rather will his whole nature develop harmoniously, and sex, about which we have become too self-conscious, take its proper place as the (normally) unconscious inspirer of many of our most vital activities and happiest emotions. And once morbidity has been put away, and with it the constant preoccupation of boys and masters with this one topic, and all that suspicion and suggestiveness which we know so well, then the graver problem which has to do with the relationship of boy to boy will be found to have been solved at the same time. No one who knows a public school is likely to deny that sexual emotion is nearly always an element in the intensest schoolboy friendships; but that makes them neither the less lovely nor the less desirable. Indeed, the value of such friendships at their finest cannot be overestimated. For when a boy "falls in love," he learns for the first time something of the real splendour of living:

he comes into his birthright of beauty and ecstacy, and understands how the greatest happiness is to be found in doing everything for the service of another. There is something very loathsome about the spying, and secretiveness, the jokes and unclean hintings which, in the majority of schools, make such a friendship appear a thing to be ashamed rather than proud of, and often in the end actually render it shameful. Given a clean atmosphere, an absence of suspicion on the part of masters and of morbidity on that of boys, and we believe that very rarely would physical acts result from schoolboy love.

But the reader will be asking, for the second time, "What is all this to do with political education?" And again we answer—everything. For we believe that the joy in life, and the intellectual interest of which we have spoken can be awakened from where they lie dormant in a boy's nature by political education. The subject is the boy's own destiny as a member of human society and a part of the universe (for it will be remembered that we include ethics and philosophy with history and politics under the one broad heading); and there is hardly a boy who does not find, at best in all these subjects, at

worst in one of them, the inspiration to vital work and the sense of living well, which goes with it. The boys start reading, widely; a thousand topics occupy their attention; poetry, plays, novels—all these are reached from the one starting point. Then clubs and groups of various kinds are started in their houses; and the sex problem has become as much as it ever can become, a thing of the past.

Nor, we may add, are we merely theorising, and talking of hypothetical goods which might conceivably follow from the adoption of our plan. All that we have written of is within our own experience. Time after time while we were making our experiments did we come across cases of boys whose moral health had been saved by their new-found interest. One had turned to physical excitement as the only possible relief from the tedium of Latin grammar; after a year under the altered circumstances he turned to it no longer. The parents of another (a boy of about sixteen) had attempted to base his morality solely on Christian dogma, which meant nothing to him; and the result was disastrous. But a course of lectures on Plato's philosophy gave him what religion had previously failed to

give him—a belief in an ideal and the distinction between right and wrong, and a determination to do always what seemed to him the absolute best.* But by far the most remarkable results were achieved in the house of which we have already spoken in Chapter I. During his first fortnight of office, the new head boy followed the old method; he examined all suspicious cases, discovered some that he had not suspected, and dealt out the traditional treatment. Then he followed the old method no longer; nor did he ever return to it from that day till the day when he finally left the school before his time. Instead, he set about interesting the boys in politics. We have already described the course of his experiments; how enthusiasm, kindled over newspapers, spread to plays, to poetry, to pictures, and to music. And the result? The house was transformed: it became such a place as every mother hopes the house where her own

* Not that we believe that Plato is a greater teacher than Christ. Our opinion is the opposite; but we are also of Shelley's opinion when he said, "I would rather go to hell with Plato than to heaven with Paley." Much that is called Christian is not of Christ. Also there are no doubt minds so constituted that they will get more good in certain circumstances from the lesser teacher.

son is may be. And yet during the whole time of which we are speaking only one boy was beaten, and he for an act quite unrelated to the seventh or indeed to any other of the Ten Commandments.

NOTE.—A fortnight after the writing of the present book was projected, one of the writers was dispatched on military duty to India, and the above chapter was sent home from "Somewhere" in "Somewhere"—I believe Taranto. Close co-operation in authorship became impossible, and upon his collaborator in England devolved the responsibility of sole editorship. I leave the above chapter almost as it was written, for there is about it, as it seems to me, an indomitable optimism which was a characteristic of the writer's work and a cause of its success.

Still, in so far as it suggests that a complete solution has been found for a problem I believe to be insoluble, I must in honesty add a few words on my own account.

Our direct experience, or the more remarkable part of it, amounts to this: that a certain head of a house achieved during the course of a year, using the methods described, an uplifting

of the whole tone of his house that can only be described as marvellous. Other heads elsewhere have no doubt achieved similar results by other means, though we have never come across an example equally remarkable. The goal can be reached, presumably, by the road of saintliness. It might be reached, though it is doubtful, by the road of Puritanism and "efficiency," the appeal to abstinence and "living hard." It cannot be reached, that is certain, by merely disciplinary methods and the appeal to fear, for the commonest form of schoolboy vice is such that, even allowing for the casualness of boys, it will not be detected once in a hundred cases.

Something, however, must be discounted from this result, by reason of the fact that the experiments were new. These boys had an enthusiasm bred of the fact that they rightly felt themselves to be pioneers. They felt themselves to be making history, certainly for the first, possibly for the last, time in their lives, and whether you admire them or whether you laugh at them, making history they were, so far as their own world was concerned. It seems doubtful whether the spiritual force engendered would have lasted at full strength when the

thing had become normal, and it was no longer possible to start the hare of some new "stunt" (as they called it, I am sorry to say) once every two or three weeks. The experiment was cut short in its prime, and how it would have developed when the first generation of enthusiasts had passed away, one cannot say.

As for the other houses, something had been begun in two or three, but nothing of much value had been achieved. The minorities hesitated between a desire to imitate and a desire to be quite original, and the majorities looked a trifle askance upon the whole affair. And the masters came in here and put every sort of difficulty in the way, for by this time the collapse was visibly approaching.

None the less, the lines on which this strange and temporary achievement was based are the only lines along which the moral problem can be grappled with. A perfectly "pure" public school is as impossible as a perfectly satisfactory Marriage Law. A few incorrigibly bad boys there will always be—incorrigible, that is, when they have reached public school age. Hopelessly inanimate and feeble boys there will be also, doomed to become the victims of the bad. But

the present moral average might be immensely raised, and the plain way to raise it is to provide other adventures for the soul. A boy once said to me, speaking of the matter in hand, "You see, it's the only thing I've ever found to do here really 'on my own.'" It was, in fact, his one adventure. No amount of class-room tasks, however well devised, no amount of organised games, however healthy, no amount of school religion, however sincere, could fill that gap. We must put the boys on the lines to organise their own adventures, and the only adventures that can compete with this absorbing adventure of misapplied sexuality, must be adventures that really lead up to the highest and best things of life. It was only when he found an empire to save that Clive ceased to be a young ruffian. Nothing lower than "politics" will suffice.

CHAPTER IX

RELIGION

"It may be a slight shock to some people to hear that 'Divinity' should grapple with Capitalism and Imperialism."—*Manchester Guardian.*

"Politics, in the large sense, is one of the main gateways to the understanding of fellowship, and of that which lies beyond fellowship, and leads boys to express something further-reaching than the thought of the dear city of Cecrops."—Mr. Kenneth Richmond in *The New Age.*

THIS chapter will be as short as its subject-matter is important. Indeed, the problem of religion as it presents itself in a public school is so interesting and so difficult that one might well apologise for relegating it to a late chapter in a brief book upon an apparently quite alien subject. But we have set out to recount our experience of political education; and in our experience we found that politics and religion lay not so very far apart. Without any very direct suggestion from us, several of our pupils

to whom the Kingdom of Heaven had been hitherto a somewhat uninteresting abstraction found that they could not think out to their satisfaction the problems of the city of Cecrops until they had formulated their ideas upon the city of God. The history of *The School Observer* illustrates this well enough. That journal showed a distinct tendency to become a religious organ. At the time of its suppression the embarrassed editor was confronted with three long articles—the longest, it must be confessed, his own—all of them bearing upon the nature of the Deity, and, lest we should be misunderstood, all of them broadly Christian in character.

Now, a certain type of clerical head master has often tried to impress upon his boys—he would try it on his staff also did he not know that it would be waste of time and energy—that the two hours devoted to "divinity" are the two most important school hours of the week. And he is quite right: they are the most important, or, rather, but for opportunities missed, they would be. For a liberal education without a foundation in religion is not merely defective, it is impossible. If the religious foundation

offered by the teacher proves no foundation, proves a mere meaningless excrescence upon the time-table, then a religion will be sought and found elsewhere, even though it be, as is most likely, a religion such as is generally classed as no-religion, mere worship, as Ruskin called it, of Britannia Agoraia, Britannia of the Market Place, the Goddess of Getting-on. That, it is to be feared, is very much what we have at present, for the religion of the divinity lesson is usually nothing at all, and the religion of the school chapel has hardly got beyond the tribal stage, and does not suffice for the modern man in his maturity, nor for most types of thoughtful schoolboy. There are some old boys, perhaps many, who have a strong sentimental regard for "the old chapel"; but it is as a venerable symbol of the corporate life of their boyhood that they regard it, not as a place of divine worship. The religion they carry away from the school chapel has very little connection with the message of the gospel they heard there: it is a religion not of Jesus Christ, but of Alma Mater. Their attitude to it is not strictly religious at all, but romantic.

It is easy to write with a certain irony on

this subject, but that is the last thing we want to do, for the problem of the public schools is here, as elsewhere, a profoundly difficult one, and many good men have devoted the best of their life's energies to it, and have achieved here and there a fine measure of success. But their success has been personal and exceptional. The rule is what we have just described. Indeed, the problem of the schools is but a single aspect of the problem of the Church and the world at large. Two years ago the National Mission came, proclaiming that the Church had been a failure, and so much has recently been written on these lines by the leaders of the Churches themselves that it is unnecessary for us to enlarge upon the well-worn theme. Nominally the schools are "Church" schools. "Chapels" are as compulsory as football, and all boys, with a very few marked and conscious exceptions, are confirmed and expected to become communicants. But in actual fact, many of them come from homes where connection with the Church is purely nominal, even if it exists at all. Thus a dangerous element of formalism and make-believe is introduced from the start. The masters again;—fifty years ago they were

parsons almost without exception—stern, godly, whiskered individuals—singularly unlike, as it would seem, to our colleagues or ourselves. The masters of to-day are nearly all laymen, and laymen with as wide a variety of religious opinions as the members of the Stock Exchange; but—and this is where they differ from the members of the Stock Exchange—they will all be, during term time, formal members of the Church of England. Once again, formalism and make-believe. Yet what would you have? The schools are the schools of the nation, not of a sect; and to-day the Church of England is, within the nation, but a sect. And even supposing the schools were, or could be, genuinely Church of England schools, another problem would remain, for within the Church itself there is a wide variety of opinions, and beliefs without which Christianity is impossible to one will be mere blasphemy to another. It has been said with some truth that our religious ideas have undergone as great a revolution in the last hundred years as our knowledge of machinery, and that the sermons of 1820 are as obsolete as its stage coaches. For the author of this notion—and he is a clergyman—this may be true; but

whereas none of his congregation travel in stage coaches, it is very likely that the theology of some of them is nearer to that of the sermons of 1820 than to his own.

Now, it is obvious that our experience of political education does not provide a way out of all these difficulties; but it seems to us to throw a certain glimmering of light upon them. Several of our boys who, in spite of schoolroom "divinity" and the school chapel, had more or less outgrown the religious faith of their childhood, and found nothing satisfactory to take its place, were led back towards religion by their interest in politics. In fine, they had discovered the intellectual need for a religion, and liberalism pointed the way to Christianity. As in the Middle Ages, philosophy had been the "ancilla Fidei." The suggestion is that the fault of our religious teaching in school and chapel has been that it is not sufficiently philosophical. By a philosophical religion it need hardly be said that we do not mean the obtrusion of a remote and contentious theology, but a religion based upon a real understanding of political principles and crying social needs.

"It may be a slight shock to some people to hear that 'divinity' should grapple with capitalism and imperialism," says the *Manchester Guardian* reviewer. It may: none the less we believe that it is with such problems that Christianity has to grapple if there is ever to be a Christian society upon earth. The last thing we wish to suggest is the off-hand conclusion that capitalism and imperialism are in all their manifestations anti-Christian. The world is not so simple a place. But we cannot go on applying one set of principles to our private lives and another set of principles to our politics and industry. Man is not so illogical a creature as that. There is bound to be, finally, either a levelling up or a levelling down towards a single uniform standard. No proverb is more dangerous than "Charity begins at home." When it begins in the place most congenial to its exercise, it is apt to end there. Lord Melbourne is said to have complained, after hearing a sermon, "Things are coming to a pretty pass, when religion claims to interfere with a man's private life." We smile at Lord Melbourne's honest indignation. Our turn come to be indignant when the sermon applies the Christian

"paradoxes" to industry, commerce, and international relations.

And it is along these lines that religious teaching can be made absorbingly interesting. It all comes round to the old question, "Are we going to apply Christianity to the problems of modern society or are we not?" The case against doing so can be found every day in the press, so here, at any rate, is an issue worth facing, with a presumably infallible authority to support each side. The direction of most religious teaching hitherto has been too purely personal; the exhortation is too obvious and the appeal falls flat. Politics without religion lacks foundation; but religion without politics lacks quite half its content. Christianity is the leaven, but so also is politics the lump.

Along these lines, we believe, one might get in the middle and lower parts of the school results analogous to those we have described in the cases of some sixth form boys. The present writer used to teach Divinity to a middle form on the Modern Side, and whenever a Gospel happened to be scheduled, he found ample material to his hand. It is surprising how little, for all the sermons they have heard, most boys of

sixteen have faced the ideas expressed in the most hackneyed texts. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. . . ." "Love your enemies." "Take no thought for the morrow." A most mischievous half-truth has got about that these sayings are not to be taken literally. Boys have told me that a "rich man" means one who has grown rich by robbery. Well, what is robbery? "La propriété, c'est le vol"? "Love your enemies" means, I have been told, "Have no enemies: lead a peaceable life; but if . . ." There was a case apparently not provided for. "Take no thought for the morrow." On this I once got the delightfully honest comment, "Christ must have said this to cheer the disciples when they were depressed. Taken literally it would be absurd." With such candour on the pupils' side, surely the teacher's task is not hopeless. Here at last we have the atmosphere of honest controversy, and without controversy there is no freedom of thought; without freedom of thought no conviction; without conviction, no education and no religion.

CHAPTER X

CURRICULUM

It is always difficult to define the limits of a topic. This book is concerned with one educational subject alone, politics in the very broad sense we here attach to the term. Our contention is that that subject is of paramount importance, and that it should provide the basis and foundation of liberal education. With that idea in view, we have given some account of our own experience; we have also considered what seemed the most reasonable and weighty objections; we have also shown how politics reacted, in our experience, upon morality and religion. And then it might seem well to make an end. But an education is, or should be, a single whole, and the entire omission of certain aspects lends itself to misunderstanding. Our previous book suggested to one reader, at least, that we regarded subjects other than those we treated of, as

possessing no educational value other than a purely utilitarian one. That was not at all the impression we wished to create, and it is with a view to correcting it that we attempt a brief general survey of the non-political subjects and their place in a curriculum which took politics as its centre. But we offer these remarks with much diffidence. If this book and its predecessor have any value, it is due to the fact that they are based on direct and vivid teaching experience; and here for the most part the guidance of experience deserts us.

One very natural criticism of our thesis is that politics, though it may stimulate interest, cannot provide intellectual discipline. The criticism is natural because, so long as the English subjects are regarded as a subsidiary matter, they are and will be treated by masters and boys in an easy going manner. Other and sterner subjects are reckoned on to supply the disciplinary factor which the English subjects lack. There is, in fact, a very prevalent idea that interest and discipline vary inversely to one another; that discipline is to be found in doing what is uninteresting; and that interest is to be found in doing what is "slack." This is very

bad psychology. For we aim at training willing servants, fit to become masters, not slaves fit for nothing but slavery. The only valuable discipline is self-discipline, and self-discipline will only be reached when the boy has realised for himself that the work is intrinsically worth doing, and when he has realised that he will have become interested. Again, what is interesting must be absorbing, and such work can never be "slack." The mistake seems to arise from a confusion of ideas in connection with the word "easy." It is no more "easy" to write an adequate essay on the subject of National Guilds than it is to learn the principal parts of a large number of irregular verbs: possibly it is much more difficult. But under certain conditions which we have seen produced, a boy will find it "easy" to gird himself up to the former task; indeed, he will get so absorbed that he will find it difficult to leave off. Few questions are less "easy" than those connected with a paper-money currency, but one half-holiday afternoon we found a vigorous discussion on this subject in progress between a group of cricketers whom rain had driven to the pavilion. Ordinary history teaching, if only time is allowed and

certificate examinations do not threaten, affords scope for a great variety of exercises demanding careful thought and accurate knowledge.

So much in answer to the suggestion that only through the non-political subjects can real hard work be secured.

The non-political subjects fall into three groups—languages, mathematics, and the natural sciences.

Probably no one regards the teaching of foreign languages in the public schools as at all satisfactory at present, and the chief reason is that far too much is attempted, with far too little consideration of what will be achieved. Most boys are either simultaneously learning, or have at one time simultaneously tried to learn, three foreign languages, Latin, Greek, and French, or Latin, French, and German. The burden is too heavy for them to bear. Only the minority have any real gift for foreign languages, and for the rest the aim should be one foreign language only. Little will be accomplished in any subject unless there is a real ambition to learn, and there can be no such ambition unless a definite goal is in sight. The goal here is real knowledge in a foreign language,

for half or quarter-knowledge of a foreign language is a most unsatisfying accomplishment. The obvious language is French. Even so, many will not learn to write it correctly, and as for speaking it, that is an accomplishment so much more conveniently acquired elsewhere that we offer no opinion as to how far it is worth attempting at school.* But fluent reading of French is a thing within the reach of practically any boy, and even the stupid boy, if he concentrates upon this, to the exclusion of other and more difficult linguistic tasks, will make such unmistakable progress that his ambitions may well be roused. And the accomplishment is one that can quickly be made useful. For instance, probably the best general history of Europe is still Guizot's book, and its French is about the easiest ever written. But we would go further. We remember once a boy being birched for circulating a copy of *La Vie Parisienne*. Does not this suggest that every house should take a French daily newspaper, and also an illustrated weekly, other than that above mentioned?

* We offer no opinion, also, on the "oral method" of teaching both modern and classical tongues, as we have no experience at all to guide us.

But while advocating the single language for the ordinary boy, we are pulled up short by the claims of Latin; and here we feel a difficulty. A good deal of what is said in favour of Latin we regard as pure superstition. It is not true that boys can only learn to write their own language correctly by means of Latin prose. Nor is it true that Latin prose supplies the ideal mental discipline. That is only true for the minority of boys who reach the stage at which real Latin prose is written. Most flounder about all their time in the stage of artificial Latin prose, wherein is nothing more than the meticulous application of a set of laboriously acquired grammatical rules—a tolerable training in conscientious application, such as any subject can supply, but nothing more. Yet it may well be true—on this point we feel uncertain—that an elementary knowledge of Latin supplies such a foundation for the understanding both of English and French, that it is worth making some sacrifices to retain it. If that be so, we would start every boy on Latin as his first foreign language. Those who showed little ability would abandon it at about the time they began French.

In the case of boys with some real linguistic

ability, we are happy to find ourselves thoroughly conservative. We believe firmly in the grand old fortifying classical curriculum, provided it is understood that the languages themselves are but means to an end, to the understanding of the classical civilisation. In fine, the goal of classics should be to-day, as it was for the Renaissance scholars, ultimately political. The classical student who, at the time when his schooling ends, is still doing no more than "settling Hoti's business" and "properly basing Oun," is in the position of Browning's "Grammarian," with this vital difference that he probably does not intend to employ his future life in building any superstructure upon the foundations thus laboriously laid.

In mathematics there is probably a deeper cleavage than in any other subject between the real thing, as mathematicians understand it, and the elementary knowledge within the reach of all. "The real thing" is perhaps the most remote and specialised of all branches of learning. For a few it is the best, indeed, the only natural, line of development; but these are few and easily recognised, and even they should not be allowed to specialise too narrowly—that is a

point which no one who is not a mathematician will dispute. At the other end of the scale comes the third of the three R's; and about that again there is no controversy, except as to the best methods of teaching it.* Yet the schools do not recognise sufficiently clearly this line of cleavage, and many boys who are presumed to have reached the end of the elementary stage remain for some time battering in vain at the doors of the inner temple. These should go back once over the elements again to see if they know them, and then give it up for good. This will mean a cheerful exodus from the upper-middle mathematical divisions. We confess to sympathy with the conservative-radical head master who said, "I shall not advocate the abolition of compulsory Greek in University examinations until I can get people to agree to the abolition of compulsory Algebra."

There is perhaps a middle term between elementary and "real" mathematics; that is

* Surely, too, the third of the three R's should include a knowledge of book-keeping, balance sheets, etc. Here we join hands heartily with the "utilitarian" school of educational reformers. We also wish that every one learnt shorthand almost as soon as he had learnt longhand.

the mathematics that is the handmaid of physics, and leads us on to the natural sciences.

To-day the claims of natural science are very insistent, and they come from more than one quarter. From one quarter comes the claim that science alone of the subjects in the time-table "means business," and makes money, and that in these strenuous times other subjects that lead to mere elegant accomplishments must crowd into a narrow space to make room for the one subject that makes for sheer efficiency. The point is often put with a certain crudity; but we may as well ignore that, and recognise that the just claims of commercial training will have to be met by the schools more fully than heretofore. Only let us recognise commercial training for what it is, and not pretend that it can ever offer a substitute for the liberal education which must continue alongside of it. But the teacher of science will more often take quite other ground, and will claim that his subject, over and above its commercial usefulness, provides most of the ingredients of a Liberal education in itself. He will point to the training it offers in habits of conscientious accuracy, its exemplification of the laws of

cause and effect, its undeviating respect for truth, and the inspiration of its endless progress, built up on the heroic researches of the great pioneers.

This claim demands careful and sympathetic scrutiny. To begin with criticism, we are quite unconvinced that science alone can train the mind to logical methods, or imbue it with a respect for truth in matters outside the scientific sphere. "Science," as the term is commonly understood, deals with material things, and, as such, it gives but little support to the mind when confronted with the problems of humanity, whether personal or political. It is only too common for the science specialist to respect cause and effect in a test-tube and despise it in a newspaper. In science no passions are evoked in favour of one solution or another. The search for truth may well be disinterested, since it is, humanly speaking, uninterested. A liberal education must train the mind to master prejudice and self-interest, and this training cannot be given in a material where prejudice and self-interest will not come into play.

As regards ordinary laboratory work, and

lectures on laboratory detail, of which science teaching at present, as many science masters agree, far too exclusively consists, our view is similar to our view on mathematics. It is often instructive, both for boy and master, to get the boys to draw up an ideal time-table. The results, as a rule, are disappointingly conventional, it is true. Few boys have ever criticised their education, except in a purely destructive and cynical spirit, and when confronted with the constructive task, produce something not very far removed from the time-table they follow out every week. But as regards science, it will often be found that the form falls into two clearly marked divisions. One part cut it down to a minimum, and would, if they had the courage of their convictions, cut it out altogether; the other part give it half, or more than half, the time-table. This probably marks the fact that for many boys a very small amount of laboratory experience, just enough to give them a notion of method, is all that they will benefit by. For the rest the training has real value and interest; but these are a minority.

But there is another aspect of science, receiving as yet far too little attention at

school, which seems to us an essential part of a liberal education. Indeed, when our own sixth form time-table was remodelled, we put in a claim for a weekly lecture on General Principles of Science, alongside with modern history and political science and economics. The general principles of natural law, evolution and heredity, the nature and cure of disease, the atomic theory of matter, general principles of astronomy—these things seem to us second only in importance to the great principles of politics themselves. Here is an extraordinary record of patient achievement, some contact with which is in itself an inspiration not merely intellectual, but moral. For it seems to us hardly fanciful to suggest that such knowledge should react—so subtle are the reactions of the boy-mind, as we have already tried to show—most favourably on the political spirit. Dr. Gregory, in his enthusiastic work in praise of his subject, "Discovery: or the Spirit and Service of Science," writes: "In the discussion of political questions, prejudice and party determine the view taken, and facts are selected and exploited not so much with the object of arriving at the truth as to confound the other side. . . . A

politician may place party above truth, and a diplomatist will conceal it on behalf of his country, but it is the duty of the man of science to attain truth at all costs. In direct opposition to the narrowness of thought which views all subjects through the distorting mirage of party prejudice, stands the absolute freedom of mind of the man of science who stands with open arms to welcome truth. . . ." And Dr. Gregory's moral would seem to be: Eschew politics and devote yourself to science. As if the world could exist without politics! As if the happy alternative to bad politicians were no politicians! The right moral surely is that which we have been drawing, with possibly wearisome repetition, throughout this book; that all that is best in the scientific mind, all that is best in the literary and artistic mind, all that is best in the religious mind, must be brought to bear upon the problems of our corporate life.

CHAPTER XI

THE YOUNG GENERATION AND THE OLD

"There, it is to be feared, they will find the parents most in their way. The normal father may endure his son being taught poetry, but he will object to the instilling of opinion other than his own."—*Outlook.*

"Fancy some imp of fifteen or sixteen assailing the author of his being, a court-worn barrister or 'rattled' stockbroker, at his evening meal: 'Father, I think Lord Bryce's bill for the reform of the House of Lords radically unsound,' or suddenly asking his mother, who, good, easy woman, is revolving in her mind the merits of a coat and skirt she has seen that afternoon at Debenham's: 'Mother, what is your opinion of the Trading with the Enemy Bill?'"—*Saturday Review.*

"Youth is asking questions as never before—asking awkward, burning questions, which put its seniors in a flutter. The seniors, under question, discover that they have no body of doctrine, and have never till now dreamt of the need of any. If they are wise, they will put away the taboo on politics and sit down with their juniors to hammer these things out, and perchance clear their own minds in the process."—*Westminster Gazette.*

By way of epilogue—an appeal to the parents.

What is it that the parents want from the schools? The question is all-important; for by

the spiritual law of demand and supply, what they want they will get. It has been said that every nation has the government it deserves. So it is with the press, and so it is with the schools: we get what we want, and what we want is what we deserve. What do we want?

There are some parents who take the public schools quite seriously as places of professional training, places where their sons will be taught to earn their livings, and they are encouraged in this notion by the fact that several professional bodies insist on successful candidature in some pass examination in school subjects as a first step towards entrance into the profession, and thereby rivet these examinations upon the schools. The result is not altogether bad. The examinations make for a deplorable ossification of the curriculum; but they also set a certain low standard, and drive a certain type of boy and master to work, and, though the type of work is not very exalted, it is better than nothing at all. On the individual boy the effect will be various. "Look here," says the house master, "there's London Matric. at the end of next term. Hadn't you better give up all this foolery with politics and do a little real

work?" The advice was taken, and perhaps we are not sufficiently impartial to offer a valuable opinion on the result. However, the boy was no fool, and the first part of the advice need never have been given. Except in the case of boys, far too numerous, who are taking examinations that ought never to have been imposed on them, "modern siders" and the like who are mugging up "prepared books" of Virgil and Euripides, work for a pass examination ought not to mean the cessation of all other intellectual activity.

There is another much more old-fashioned type of parent who stands for everything that is traditional, who is seriously disturbed if his boy wanders far afield from the old classical curriculum, who regards all new subjects as foolish fads. It is this parent, helped by an old-fashioned type of house master, who retains in a mild torture of boredom the boys who linger wasting their time in the lower reaches of the classical side.

But anything is better than nothing, and the attitude of many more parents is purely cynical. They just leave it to the schoolmaster. "Cynical" might seem a hard word with which

to repay this compliment of trust; but it is not, for there is really no compliment and no trust. The parent does not really believe in the schoolmaster's judgment. He believes in him so little that he thinks it simply does not matter what happens in the class-room, provided the boy seems to enjoy himself—how many parents really *know* whether their boys do enjoy themselves at school?—and provided the house master is not actively complaining.

Now, there is only one hope, and that is that the parents should come to look at this matter of their son's education politically. School-time is a training, and we are all familiar enough with the idea of training now. Before the war, as since, schools had their O.T.C.'s. But these O.T.C.'s were wretched perfunctory affairs, boring everybody, because we hardly any of us seriously envisaged them as a training, only as an incubus. Now, we all see them as training for a part that has got to be played, and the whole spirit is different. But the country will soon be calling upon our public school boys to play another and perhaps even more difficult part, and where is the training for that? When the war is won we shall plunge into another maelstrom; and it

will all be politics, politics, politics. The leaders of labour have roughly charted their course; they mean to make a new world for the masses whether we like it or not, and they mean in the main right. But what part are the public school men going to play? It is an extremely difficult position, and the difficulties crop up not only in the details, of which only mature experience can give a knowledge, but in the elementary principles regulating our outlook, our attitude. And that is where the public schools could come in with irresistible effect if only they would brace themselves to the task. "Your king and country need you," said the old recruiting poster of 1914. "Good God! have they never wanted me till now?" was the natural rejoinder. In any case they will not cease to want the public school boy when the war is over.

In this task the parents must co-operate. The normal father, we are told, will object if his son brings home opinions other than his own. But, in sober truth, if the son brings home the same opinions as the fathers have always held, we are in a poor way. It was the fathers and the grandfathers who brought the world to its present pass. It is the sons who, starting with

new principles from new beginnings, have got to set it on a better road. *The Saturday Review* and *The Westminster Gazette* offer us, in the quotations at the head of this chapter two little vignettes of parentage. Which would you have?

The holidays occupy rather more than a quarter, and rather less than a third of the year. If you asked what the boys do in the holidays, you would ask a question that puzzles many boys themselves to answer. The waste of school holidays is even more striking than the waste of school terms. For education should not be, indeed, cannot be, limited to term time. The proportion of boys who require "rest" in the holidays, even for the first week or two, is small. A slack time, prolonged beyond a week or so, bores most boys consumedly and ought to bore them all. We are not thinking here of the favoured few who get their fill of fishing and field sports. Such things have their limitations, perhaps, but they offer at least a time of activity, resourcefulness, and keen enjoyment. Most boys, however, live in quiet homes in towns, far from the opportunity for such things, and how these pass the time is a mystery even to themselves, as many have confessed to us. In plain words,

they *kill* the time, and thereby acquire a most dangerous accomplishment. Some few, it is true, make themselves endlessly useful to their parents, and nothing could be better. But only a few homes provide scope for an "odd-jobs man" of this type. For the bulk, holidays are simply times of unemployment.

Now, when a schoolmaster ventures to offer advice about the holidays, he might seem to be stepping presumptuously outside his own province; but that plea for reticence is one we cannot admit. Term and holidays alike are an education, and they interact upon one another so closely that the schoolmaster not only may, but must, form his judgment upon both. It is not for us to compile a detailed "Parent's Assistant." Heaven forbid! Every home has its own problems and its own opportunities, but surely there is no home in which the parents have not a range of activities, professional, commercial, political, or literary. So often, as it seems, from various motives, good and bad, the boy remains more or less excluded from these long after he has become capable of a certain partnership in his parents' interests. The drawback of life at a public school is that it is

highly artificial. Call it as you please a barrack or a monastery, a boarding-school is something cut off from the main streams of ordinary life. In the holidays the boy renews contact with ordinary life, and that periodic renewal is an essential part of his education. But surely his holidays should bring him into contact with some more of life than its superficial frivolities.

The kind of holidays we have in mind would make some call on the time and energy of the parents; and perhaps it will be said that the time and energy simply cannot be spared. Well, there was a time, fifteen years or so before, when these same parents gave ungrudgingly any amount of time and energy to the task of watching over the development of the little child now rapidly approaching manhood. But the boy of seventeen, though much more difficult to understand, is every bit as fascinating as the child of two, and the parents' time and energy devoted to the boy will be as certainly well spent.

And it will, we believe, bring a new happiness to many parents themselves. As schoolmasters, our widest experience of parents—not that we pretend it is very wide—is our experience

of boys' talk about their homes. Boys speak of their parents with deep affection and respect, as a rule; but so very often they leave an impression that they do not really know them. It is the commonest thing in the world for fathers and sons, without any positive estrangement, to get entirely out of touch with one another during the latter part of a boy's school-time. The boy develops rapidly, and the greater part of his development is quite concealed from the father. He returns home to find his father "just the same," and apparently quite unable to divine the new developments which the son is too proud to reveal uninvited. Or maybe he does attempt to reveal them, and, bungling his task, finds himself misunderstood, and lays the blame on the father. So often, as it seems, the father might have helped matters by playing a rather more active part, and going half, or even three-quarters, of the way to meet his son's confidences. But there is a natural shyness of fathers towards their sons at this stage, and shyness on one side begets shyness and misunderstanding on the other. More than once a boy has said to one of us, "What am I to do to get into touch with my father? Last

holidays we found we'd nothing sensible to talk to each other about at all." It is difficult to advise, but the most obvious thing to say is, presumably, to remind the boy that his father is but a human being like himself; that possibly the boy is himself rather unnecessarily enigmatic, and that instead of expecting the father to make all the moves, the son might himself hold out a hand and help the father to understand the changes that had taken place within him. That is how the matter stands on the boy's side, and it may help some fathers to know it.

One of our boys, we remember, wanted to discover something at first hand of the real interests of employees in his father's firm. Whatever he discovered, it made an excellent holiday interest for him. Among other things, he attended some W.E.A. lectures, because he found that the more intelligent men were interested by them. This was a boy of rather unusual initiative; but we believe there are many boys who would find a genuine interest in such matters, if the fathers gave them the lead. Thus the wretched tradition that the holidays are for unemployment would be gradually

broken down, and games would take their proper place—in holidays and term alike. Perhaps, too, the father on looking back might find that there had been some "education" in it for himself also.

The principle from which we started was that the public schools were full of glorious possibilities, to-day largely unrealised. Is not the same true of many homes?

APPENDIX

"It is quite evident that the boys have been encouraged to read periodicals such as *The Nation* and *The English Review*, and their articles read like elaborate parodies. There is no particular harm in allowing a clever boy to do monkey tricks of this type, but there is a good deal of harm in printing it instead of gently deriding the self-sufficiency of these youthful oracles."—*Church Times.*

"The most obvious fact about these articles is that the boys are writing what they mean, and what they want to say, and that they are able to do so because they feel sure of the community that forms their audience."—Mr. Kenneth Richmond in *The New Age.*

[Of the three articles that follow, the first was printed in the first issue of *The School Observer;* the second was written for the suppressed sixth issue; the last was written on the day after the final collapse of the whole experiment, and was, of course, never intended for the paper at all.]

I

Education and the Future

If workmen strike, if employers oppress, if prostitution flourishes, if paper demagogues are allowed to rule, if poverty exists, if men fight, whatever evil it is, the remedy lies at the root—education. All reforms are mere palliatives until the fundamental reform of education is perfected. There are no connecting links of argument. It is a natural corollary, justified by any particular example that may be traced.

It is another question whether education or lack of it is more calculated to hasten the ultimate ideal of well-ordered anarchy, which, consciously or unconsciously, we all entertain; but for the meanwhile the affirmative assumption must be adopted. The sole remaining question, then, is, By what means is education to rectify the immediate evils?

While it is fairly generally established that the purpose of education is efficient citizenship, it is clear that, owing to the diminished proportion of the individual to the community, the purpose is being gradually lost sight of. To borrow from scientific phraseology, the tendency of the unit to remaining an "idiot" (in the Greek sense of the word!) varies directly as the

magnitude of the mass. And this is a truism that public schools do not help to abolish. Although "school patriotism" is invariably quoted as a denial of this, there prevails in modern schools a definite inclination towards unsentimental cynicism in the matter. This does not necessarily denote an unhealthy spirit, but an increase of intellect that, whether with justification or not, vaguely asks for something wider or more substantial.

Perhaps our grandfathers are right when they tell us that the modern youth becomes a man sooner than his predecessors. Perhaps our grandfathers are right when they tell us it is a pity.

However that may be, the two facts remain, that there is a rather benighted tendency in the direction of intellectual activity, which the public school spirit makes no effort to assist, and that the public schools are inclined to produce gentlemen rather than citizens. Of course the former make better advertisements. Yet they ought not to. They would not in Germany. One day they will not here. The instance shows that the Chestertonian "England of Romance" is really the one that exists. The word "gentleman" is purely a romantic one, and a gentleman a purely romantic though enviable figure. A state in the future will not be able to thrive on gentlemen: it will need citizens.

It has cost me dear to write down this, for in my illogical mind (and no one, by the way, save a politician, could have a logical one!) I would choose without hesitation the gentleman. But that is probably because, if I could, I would sell my quills for brushes.

The conclusion from all this, then, is that I was not holding Germany up as a paragon just now, but leading up to an obvious improvement—a gentleman-citizen. Whoever thinks he fulfils the conditions implicated in the rôle may know that not only is he an uncommon and a great man, but also the embodiment of a high, practicable ideal; in the attainment of which lies the solution of the whole educational question—how, of the two component parts, to maintain the moral position of the first and create one for the second.

Except for the few, favoured with a productive imagination, the public school can as yet do nothing in this direction. It would be useless, for instance, to crowd a dull, technical science of politics on an already over-amended curriculum. One day it may not be useless. But until a new species of governess can be bred, it is. Of the species in question, I know of one example. There may be more, but not many, though of course they are, I am aware, rapidly multiplying. The only possible children's governess is the governess who attempts to teach nothing except how to learn. The ideal education is undoubtedly an *à la carte* one, but as this is impossible both physically and because a public school master has not the time to find out how to teach any particular boy, the difficulty is solved if the boy has found out how to learn from any particular master.

A man's life depends altogether on the first morsel of education he receives, so that a governess's responsibility is colossal. And, of course, a competent governess is a far holier thing than any parson's wife. Not only

must she teach not so much what he will have to learn (which would scarcely encourage him in view of its magnitude) as how he will have to learn (which could only make him eager to put the theory to the test of practice—all the more so when he finds it succeeds), but also she must attempt to discover and develop, even at this very early stage, the seeds of mental independence and originality, which alone can make him a competent citizen. Think how much easier legislation would be in a state composed of such as these ! It is the only condition that really justifies democracy. There could be no question of denying a people of this quality a voice in their own government. Representation could no longer be a game for gamblers and contortionists.

As things are, however, the progress of the public schools (and I have been dealing exclusively with public-school classes) cannot make much headway until they have clay to mould instead of granite to chisel. It is not their fault if there is no way to teach the majority, and if the few are thrown back on their own inadequate resources. The remedy lies in some measure to ensure the right primary education. Seventy-five per cent. of the public school boys have not had brilliant, discerning governesses—or even mothers. There are not enough of either to go round. So that the seventy-five per cent., possibly more, don't know how to learn, and the mere twenty-five per cent. do. It is hard to tackle effectively so intangible a problem as the correct primary method of teaching, and the statesman, through whose instrumentality this percentage is reversed, may give up politics for gold

with a clear conscience. The first step, therefore, is to reform the education of women. "Take care of the women, the men will take care of themselves."

Nevertheless, be the solution what it may, the importance of the subject cannot be over-estimated. One more illustration. The better educated a man is, the more capable he is of soaring above the spirit of national citizenship. . . .

And the next stage is the spirit of world citizenship . . . which, in the course of many, many years, together, possibly, with the development of Esperanto, means the brotherhood of men. . . .

Then perpetual peace. . . .

Then advancement to a primitive condition. . . .

Then the much-dreamed-of well-ordered anarchy. . . .

To continue till a second Milton is called upon to write as misty history a second "Paradise Lost." . . .

B. W. L.

II

"And He saw that it was good. . . ."

THROUGHOUT the Universe which He had created He set a Great Road, and on it was Man, at first invisible, but soon an infinite multitude. And then unto Man, as to nothing else in His Universe, He gave the power to move, and to walk on the Road, which He made to pass through all the Great and Beautiful Worlds, coming at last to where He is, where all is happy because all is good, and where nothing ends because there is the End. And as He looked and beheld Man scattered out upon the great Road as it wound about through the Universe, He thought to try His people, and show by a certain proof whether they were possessed of the goodness through which alone they could comprehend all things, and become able to enter the realm of perfect goodness. And so He sent the semblance of a great Fire into the Universe, which should seem utterly to destroy all things which He had made, and to cut off the hope and possibility of a future perception and life eternal.

. . . . . .

As the fire rolls on, devouring all that it meets, humanity on the Road sees its advance, and realises

that in the course of a few hours the Universe will be reduced to a smouldering cinder, that its hopes for a future life, where the Road ends, is cut short and never to be realised, and that apparently its former belief, albeit a vague and ill-defined one, in a God who is all-merciful and kind, was altogether an illusion, and merely a cause for false confidence and self-righteousness. And how will it stand the test? Would the good or the bad element in human nature assert itself in the face of absolute annihilation? It is obvious that with such a position several of the possible and no doubt ordinary motives for goodness, such as the idea of doing good in order to reap benefits or escape punishment in a future existence, and of doing good for the sake of having it recognised among others, are excluded from the proposition. Even the idea of doing good because it is in accordance with a "will of God" is excluded, since the idea of destruction coming from the direction of the End is unheard of to man, and is in direct contradiction to his ideas of God. We are brought, therefore, down to the very foundation; and the question we have to answer becomes—Is one of the elements of human nature a feeling of necessity to pursue goodness for its own sake, quite apart from any motives?

In the first place, when a supreme danger such as that already described is rapidly approaching humanity, if such a thing could be, what would be the immediate result? We know that with the ordinary dangers, such as shipwreck and air-raid, the tendency among people gathered together in large numbers is to panic,

to herd together and become temporarily deprived of normal reasoning powers. Would this be the result of the sight of approaching universal destruction? Surely not. Panic is the result, I believe, not of approaching danger simply, but necessarily of a danger which threatens to affect some of a number of people more than others, and which there is a possibility of avoiding. It is entirely the element of uncertainty or suspense which causes panic among numbers of people. Now this is an important point in the argument. It seems very easy to defeat it on the grounds that animals almost invariably herd together and panic in the face of danger, and that such action cannot be due to the element of uncertainty and suspense, since this necessitates the employment of calculative and reasoning faculties which animals presumably do not possess. The justification is to be found in a closer examination of the part played by the uncertainty in producing the panic which is common to men and animals. In the face of danger, as in everything else, man's first instinct is to reason and calculate, and his calculation results in finding the danger either avoidable and uncertain, which is almost always the case, or unavoidable and inevitable. If the danger is found avoidable, fear is the immediate result. Fear as we know it has come into being with reason, but at the same time, as will be seen later, it is only reason which can triumph over and destroy fear. This fear then brings about the destruction of reason, and the animal standard is reached, from which time the man behaves in the same way as the animals, to whom the danger is merely something out of the ordinary.

He then comes under the domination of the instinct to panic. It will thus be seen that all the mental processes which came before the reversion to the animal standard in men, are unknown to animals, and are the outcome of the purely human faculty of reason. However, if reason can by any means retain its foothold and its entirety, there will neither be fear nor the consequent breakdown of reason and the domination of panic. Now this is the position in the other case, the case in which reason finds the danger unavoidable. In the case of a danger which is unavoidable there will be no panic. It is this fact which accounts for the bravery of numbers of people going to their death on board a sinking ship; but such a position has never—or very seldom, indeed—avoided a relapse, to a certain extent, to panic, inasmuch as there is a possibility of avoiding the danger, and a possibility that some may survive, while others are doomed to perish.

In the face of universal destruction, therefore, there will be no fear and no panic. The fact that he is facing annihilation together with the rest of humanity would have an extraordinary influence on each individual, which, of course, would be just the same if he alone was aware of the danger. I remember very well an evening at school when I was told and convinced by several boys older than myself that (I even remember the date) on June 18th the earth was going to be destroyed. It had been proved, I was told, beyond the shadow of a doubt that on that particular date some natural phenomenon would take place which would inevitably entail the destruction of everything living

on the earth. This forms an interesting parallel to the present case; for at the time I was only about eight years old, and I had very scanty ideas about God and future life. To me the earth was the Universe. And, furthermore, for about an hour most of us thoroughly believed that the destruction of the earth, or the End of the World as we called it, was at hand. Of course, it might be said that there is no real parallel, since we were only children; but I believe that argument to be absolutely fallacious. In the matter of fundamental tendencies and characteristics of human nature one cannot assume such divisions. Since the present state of good and evil in human nature has taken thousands of years to become evolved, it seems unlikely that there can be caused in the individual at present any fundamental change. I therefore contend that as soon as personality and independence of character becomes evident in the individual, both the good and the evil in his nature will be present in the same way and in the same relation, although not necessarily in the same proportions or degrees, as they will be throughout the greater part of his life. This personality becomes evident without any doubt at a very early age, certainly by the age of eight; and in so far as the development of good and evil is dependent upon the development of character, it seems likely that these elements will be more clearly marked in the child of eight than in the second infancy of the man of eighty.

To return to the personal incident. I recall very vividly now the half-hour which followed my conviction of Universal destruction, and, of course, I realise

my actual feelings and their probable causes more clearly now than I did at the time. The real force of my conviction only lasted for about an hour, but in that time, and aided no doubt by a rather strained imagination, I was, I feel convinced, in the same position as any one of the individuals on that great Road as they see the Fire approaching and devouring the entire Universe.

As the affair was being explained to me I remember I was terrified, but very soon, and as soon as I realised the situation, which it must be remembered the people on the Road would do almost instantaneously, this feeling entirely left me. And the next feeling, a very forcible one, was rather extraordinary, being as it was an overpowering feeling of solitude. It was evening, and twenty or thirty of us were all in a large class-room together, and for many minutes I felt more lonely than I ever had before; I felt cut off from all those around me, and I see that, as Peer Gynt would have said, "I had become myself." As has already been said, I was not frightened, and what I did in those minutes was to work. It was "prep-time," and it is an interesting fact, as bearing out what has already been said both about the establishment of individuality with consequent opportunities of concentration, and also about the maintenance of reason, that I was able to "do" in those minutes, and do better than usual, the work that generally demanded more than the allotted hour.

Very soon, however, the feeling of solitude passed away and its place was taken by a feeling of exactly

the opposite nature, a feeling of Unity, of extraordinary fellowship, followed by a wonderful sensation of happiness. All this sounds rather grotesque, and the continued use of these rather meaningless epithets is very ineffectual in expressing what they are meant to convey. But it must be remembered that the position is altogether an extraordinary one; and the feelings and sensations resulting from such a position were extraordinary at the time and still are extraordinary. The position seems quite unique; it is difficult to imagine where and how else that same mental condition could be produced: older people would not have credited the story even for the short time that we did, and younger children would not have had the independence of thought and imagination to picture and contemplate the situation. At the time it was my good fortune to experience things which I have never experienced before or since, and which I believe few ever have experienced.

However, you ask for a return to the question of whether goodness is an immanent reality in human nature; you ask perhaps, in view of the incident described, "If it had been in your power to do something at that time which was supremely pleasurable but at the same time contrary to your moral ideas, would you have done it?" The answer, which is mainly contained in or drawn from what has gone before is—No; and the direct reason is, because, in the conditions produced by the position described, nothing but what is good remains in the human nature. The bed-rock has been reached, and it is good; the causes of evil and of its continuance are removed.

Ever since man has led a corporate life it seems probable that one outstanding evil has prevailed, in greater or less degrees according to the rate and amount of progress made by any community. And this evil is the lack and suppression of individuality. It seems impossible to account for it, except by simply saying that it is, and has always been a characteristic tendency of human nature; however, this is the most encouraging answer possible, because it assumes that this evil can eventually be eradicated. No one can surely deny that there is a lack of individuality at present; its chief manifestations, of course, are to be found in hatred, and in the spirit of competition and rivalry; it produces a clash between individual opinions and actions which is so apparent that it cannot be denied, and need not be enlarged upon. But, apart from these more obvious manifestations, this failing has been responsible for the production and continuance of *all* that is evil in man. Human nature is the foundation of our life, of that foundation every individual is entitled to partake; and, furthermore, that foundation is good. Every individual possesses a portion of this foundation as his right; and what is the result, under these circumstances, of lack of individuality? Surely the result is that some parts of those individual sections, parts which are in some cases similar to and in other cases different from parts of other individual sections, are used as the foundation, while the remainder is left unused. For, for the most part, men either employ those parts of their portion of the foundation of goodness which are common to as many other individual sections as possible, or, like

Alceste, the parts which are definitely opposed to most others. In any case where the foundation is undeveloped and unused there grows, like a poisonous growth, sin, which is made of and feeds upon the material of the good foundation, which has been put to the wrong use. Sin and evil are not separate, in the strict sense, from good. It seems inconceivable that good and evil should have had different origins, and should have existed as rival elements in human nature without the one having by this time triumphed over the other.

In matters which affect every member of a body similarly, the combined influence of all those members should be brought to bear; but where every individual can "be himself" and interpret and use his portion of the foundation of goodness in the complete way for which he was made and intended, without affecting others, he should be allowed to influence them or be influenced by them, without interference on the part of any other individual. Since this has not been the case, we have had the continuance of sin, and until it is the case, there always will be sin.

Now, in the position described, complete individuality is established and evil ceases to exist and becomes a thing of the past. With the near prospect of universal destruction, there is immediately a cessation of progress; and then, as in the incident described, there comes complete individuality—every individual becomes himself. With a common destruction inevitable and with the establishment of individuality, co-operation in its true sense prevails, and with it the surpassing and disappearance of evil; and then that

wonderful happiness . . . of all this I am convinced. I remember well the effect for an hour or so among a few of us that evening. The contrast between the atmosphere in the little room in which the most impressed of us gathered during that time, which was free, I know, from everything but good, and that of a day or two later when we made fun of the whole affair, is so marked that my opinion on the matter is very definite.

Goodness alone there was at the beginning, and goodness alone there will be at the end. No man is the cause of his own downfall, but he alone as an individual can be the maintainer of his foothold. Individuality in all that concerns the individual, alone can make and keep life clean and sweet. If this individuality could, by such means as education, be established, there would be constituted a *uniting* force through humanity which could lead it, in the course of time, in the way it should go.

. . . . .

And as He raised the semblance of the Fire from the Universe, He looked upon Man and saw that he was good.

J. A. A. J.

III

The Dream

How much of our life seems and is a dream! How often we feel ourselves carried off our feet and borne along on a tide of circumstances, tossed backwards and forwards on a sea of conflicting events, now hurried along by a current of opinion, now blinded with the spray of false accusation, then motionless for a moment, trying to collect our shattered thoughts before the next onslaught: but all the time out of touch, consciously, with what is going on, utterly powerless, trying to gather up the threads and recover consciousness. Any action that we take, any word that we utter, is done without thought, without knowledge, and without any result. And yet neither the cause nor the effect are, strictly speaking, physical. The position is a mental attitude, in this case mental helplessness, and this is dependent solely upon the relation of the mind to exterior circumstances. When we are fully conscious, we are ourselves each the centre of a little world, which includes all that concerns us, and the appearance of this depends entirely upon its particular meaning for us. We do not, cannot, under these circumstances, see anything exactly as it is: its appearance is

influenced by its importance for us or by the degree of approval, or disapproval which we ourselves attach to it. When our life becomes a dream, our sphere is broken into and usurped by the changing of values, shapes, and appearance of things within it. The old familiar forms are transfigured and tampered with, our mistaken or incomplete idea of persons is revealed, and a host of new and inexplicable forms appear; with the result that we are literally bewildered, and instead of regarding things with reference to their influence upon us, we see things as they are in themselves—when we can see at all—and feel what they actually do to us.

There can be no one who is not aware of this experience, in a greater or a less degree. I speak of it as dreaming because that is the analogy which best represents the circumstances, all of which have been explained except one. In the same way as we are not conscious that what we have been dreaming is a dream until we awake, so in these periods of our actual life in which we are deprived of will and are borne along by exterior circumstances and forces, we are not aware of our helplessness, of our utter weakness, of the significance of what we have seen and heard, until we have regained consciousness and woken again to our freedom.

In this sense I have recently had a dream, and only since have I realised that what I dreamt was fact; and then I was able to place it all within my sphere—its ideas, its causes, and its effects have become or are becoming the familiar forms and shapes, in the midst of which I am, like a spider at the centre

of its web, placed with my hands on every thread. And this is that dream.

Full of life and happiness I set out with another, one who was a friend and had lived with me for a time, sharing the same hopes, methods, and ideals. Laughing as we went, with the smiling world around us and the glad faces of those we knew, we made our way to the house of one who, older than ourselves, had inspired and befriended in us those hopes and ideals. And there we learnt from him that the authorities of the community, the institution to which we belonged, had taken offence at our methods and by suppressing them had destroyed our aims and all that was most dear to us. As we sat there in silence, my mind cast back over the time—it was little more than a year—since our outlook had been entirely changed. I saw the school a throbbing piece of mechanism with its bells, its clocks, and its governors, set down in a place of great beauty. Blind to anything of beauty, it worked with a rhythm and a precision which became a twentieth-century development (although it had been set up in 1557, and was still running on very nearly its original lines—which was the reason, so they say, of why it "worked" so "well"). I saw it at work and was myself made part of its raw material. Into its hungry mouth there went childhood at its best, full of energy, with every kind of ability, talent and promise, enterprise and ambition; through its teeth, its moulds, and its classrooms they passed, until they issued from the end a single and singular type of humanity, moulded, stamped, docketed and numbered—to take

their place, or rather, and this is the saddest note of all, their very numerous and different places in the world.

While this was passing through my mind we got up and went out for a walk.

And then there came the War, and the men and institutions of Europe were put to a supreme test. And the immediate result was that men began to think, began to look about them, and realising the palpable evil of war, began to wonder whether they had not been mistaken in their values and systems. Men soon came to realise that they did not fulfil their entire duty if they followed as nearly as possible in the footsteps of their great-grandfathers, but that as the world moved it behoved them to move; that each man is made with the possibility of every attitude and achievement as seeds within him; that circumstances alone had caused him to live on some of these and not on others; that intolerance was therefore a crime of the most unpardonable character; that it was wrong and unprofitable to let one's self be borne along on the surface of the world's tide—and that it was every man's duty to use the world as he finds it for the development and fulfilment of all that is best within him, and not to depend upon one thing and reject another, favour one opinion, and oppose or even disregard another. And those in the school who first realised this, determined not to submit to the guiding and moulding of this mechanical institution, but to look at the world around and outside them—its beauty, its methods, its effects, its possibility, its wonder and its

joy, and to develop for themselves, under the guidance and suggestion of those whom they trusted, their own powers, with their own principles to guide them and their own aims to reach.

And in the carrying out of this plan and in the suggesting of it to others and in witnessing the results in others and in the institution to which they belonged, they, and later I and all those who followed them, found great happiness—a happiness which I felt could come from nowhere else, and certainly a happiness such as I had never before experienced. A greater facility in all intellectual activity, and in avoiding and fighting everything which one felt to be wrong, a greater confidence, and determination through self-dependence in all things, are some of the natural immediate fruits of a self-conceived basis of thought and action which refused to accept blindly everything that was handed down or dealt out.

The permanent results in the shape of statistics and concrete evidence are proof and witness to the rightness of the undertaking. But now it is all of the past—the reasons are irrelevant; suffice it that they are iniquitous, and more than iniquitous, since they have murdered what is right.

And now we had come, after passing through a great field of green corn rustling in the light wind, to a fence, on which we sat. My retrospective thoughts had now caught up to the present—but I was still dreaming. All that I thought was unconscious, out of my control and wonderful. Our attempt had been very beautiful, had been a work of art, and in many

ways had come to a beautiful and artistic end. Like a great and wonderful bubble, wrought in many and enchanting colours, it rose up complete at that moment from its birthplace and deathbed—and I was happy again.

Then from the place down below us—that place in which we had striven and apparently failed—I seemed to hear the voice of those who opposed and hated us in our ways—those who were making the school into a machine again—and were rejoicing in it, as they pumped in the oil:

"The Germans are verrmin—it is your work in life to *krrussch* them!"

And at that very moment there came by three German prisoners—passed us, jumped over the fence and were gone; but the likeness! it was more than striking; never, never shall I forget it—and I was convinced.

The school, its very self, its soul, had struggled to its feet, and as a little child was taking its first conscious steps—the most beautiful, perhaps, that it was ever destined to take—when they, those mechanicians, with their mailed fists smote it in the face, crushed it heartlessly to the ground, with Louvain and Belgium not only before their eyes but on their very lips.

"Oh, this world is a rotten place," he said, at my side.

"I wonder," I murmured in reply, and I still do. . . .

J. A. A. J.

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